MAVERICK

THE WEST

TRUE STORIES OF THE OLD WEST

AUGUST 1966 PDC 35¢

CUSTER'S LAST BATTLE
By one of his troop commanders

STRANGE LIFE OF MICKEY FREE

BUBBLING CAULDRON AT SUTTER'S FORT

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KUNG-FU will NOT be sold in any store, and is available ONLY by mail to serious students who must vow NEVER to use it as an aggresor—but only as self-defense to protect himself, his friends and family. We don't ever want a criminal or hoodlum to be able to buy it because of its deadly power.

Become a NEW MAN!

Our streets aren't safe today. Crime increases daily. You no longer have to be helpless, ashamed or humiliated—and look pitiful in the eyes of your friends. Protect yourself, your family, your girl friend from hoodlums and wisecracking bullies. With KUNG-FU you can use the hidden power that lies within you to master every situation! You'll laugh as you send bullies and criminals flying in terror, and you'll walk the streets happy, calm and confident in your new power! And you'll do

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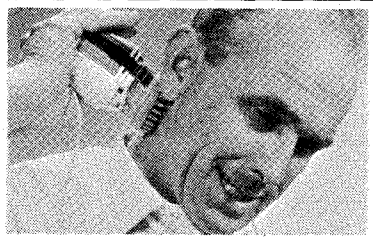

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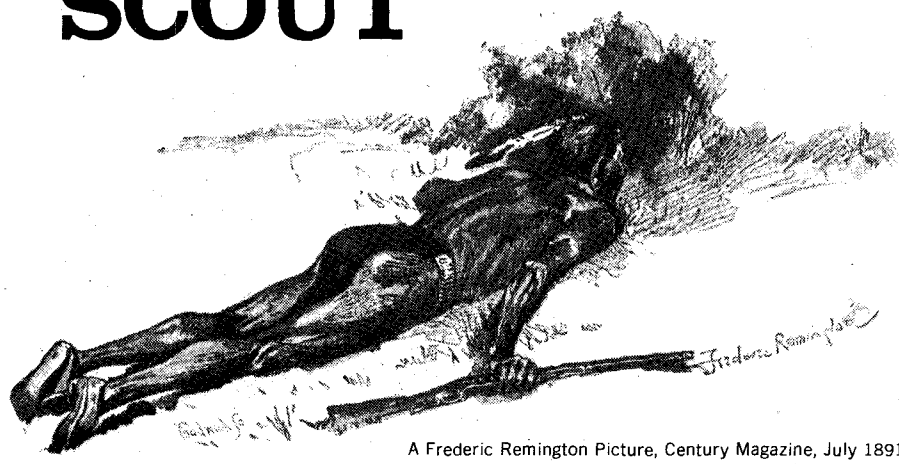
THE EDITOR SPEAKS

THE OLD SCOUT



A Frederic Remington Picture, Century Magazine, July 1891

Ask Westerners to name the most dramatic happening on the old frontier and you're sure to get a variety of answers. Texans will never forget the Alamo. The gold discovery at Sutter's Mill will have its proponents and the homesteaders' run on the Cherokee Outlet will come in for comment.

These and many others occupy important places in the history of the Old West, but we're inclined to think Custer's last battle tops them all for sheer drama.

George Armstrong Custer—Long Yellow Hair, as the Indians called him—is in a class by himself. Graduated from West Point in 1861, the Ohio soldier saw action at the first battle of Bull Run, distinguished himself in McClellan's Peninsular campaign and was made a brigadier general at 23, the youngest general in the Union Army.

Custer led the charge that turned back Jeb Stuart's horsemen at Gettysburg, became a national celebrity for his fighting under General Philip Sheridan in the great cavalry battle at Yellow Tavern and was given the rank of major general when only 25. More important, he cut off Lee's retreat from Petersburg in the final days of the War Between the States, received the flag of truce and was present when Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Courthouse.

Given the rank of lieutenant colonel and assigned to the 7th Cavalry operating in the West after the war, Custer was court-martialed and set down for leaving his command without permission at Fort Wallace, Kansas, in 1867. Reinstated through the influence of General Sheridan in 1868, he led an attack on Indians camped along the Washita River during which women and children were massacred along with the braves. He was accused of abandoning a small detachment of his men during that action and those soldiers were annihilated by the Indians.

Under the command of General Alfred Terry, Custer led a regiment into the Black Hills when gold was discovered in that area. The mission was to locate red men who were causing trouble because the whites had violated a treaty by moving into the territory.

This action was climaxed with the battle of the Little Big Horn on June 25, 1876, in which Custer and more than 200 of his soldiers were killed. The story of what took place there, written by one of Custer's officers, appears on page 14 of this issue of *The West.*

This story tells as much as anyone knows about Custer's last battle, but many questions remain unanswered. Why did Custer split his command and make such a daring frontal attack on so many Indians? Did his well known arrogance defeat him or did the men who should have come to his support fail him? Was Custer trying to cover himself with glory and regain favor with President Grant whose blacklist he headed? Why didn't the Indian victors scalp and mutilate him as they did other members of the regiment?

Quien sabe?

This month's cover artist, Leonard Howard Reedy, is one of the few painters who have devoted their lives to the portrayal of Western people and places. He has studied the early history of the West, its characters, Indian lore and the red man's way of life and preserved the Western scene for posterity.

We are pleased to add Mr. Reedy's "Sign of Peace" to *The West's* long list of covers by outstanding American artists. ●

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THE WEST

TRUE STORIES OF THE OLD WEST
AUGUST 1966 VOL. 5 No. 3

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Cover painting "Sign of Peace" by Leonard H. Reedy
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THE MAIL POUCH

Letters from "old-timers" who say our magazines bring back fond memories or take them "back home" give us great pleasure. That's exactly what we're trying to do. And we're not forgetting the younger readers, either. We want to give them a true picture of the Old West as it really was. When letters tell us we've accomplished these things we consider our work well done.

Here's what the readers have to say this month.

MOUNT SHAVANO

Dear Mr. Grayson:

Re: Ghost Riders of the Old West, June, 1966, issue of *The West* by Frank Freeman, I wish to say it is a truly remarkable story, very interesting.

Mount Shavano is located approximately 14 miles northwest of Salida, Colorado, in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. Many years ago a woman poet, Grace England Turner, wrote a very beautiful poem about the Angel of Shavano. At present I can recall only two lines of the first stanza and the full last stanza:

Oh beautiful, beautiful, Angel of Snow
Far off in the distance on Mount Shavano

And oh, may our souls
While we linger below,
Be as spotless and white
As the Angel of Snow

"Colorado Remembers Baby Doe" in the same issue is also an excellent story.

Probably the first Christmas celebrated by American citizens in Colorado was the cold and blustery December 25th of 1806 when Capt. Zebulon Montgomery Pike and his small party of explorers were camped on the Arkansas River about seven and a half miles northwest of the present day city of Salida. This was near the mouth of Squaw Creek, about six and a half miles from the foot of Shavano Mountain.

According to a copy of *Pike's Journal,* the food had run out on the 23rd of December. No game had been seen for several days. On Christmas Eve, however, hunting parties killed eight buffalo. This became their Christmas dinner. Buffalo was not only the main dish, it was the only dish.

Sincerely,
Joe Glivar
Rt. 1, Box 388
Salida, Colorado

"BACK HOME"

Gentlemen:

I have been a reader of *The West* and *Golden West* for quite awhile, and I enjoy every issue. One story in particular brought nostalgic feelings, so much so that I have kept the issue and reread the story several times.

I am referring to the story about the new soddy in the April, 1966, issue of *The West.* I am a native of a village in western Nebraska and although I never lived in a sod house there were plenty of them close by and the account of the furnishings in the soddy in the story took me right "back home" in memory, that is. I thought it was a dandy story, well told, and factually correct. No doubt about it! The only item of furniture we had in our home not described in the story was a Sears Roebuck "parlor" organ, bought from a catalogue and cost $52.50. It was the only musical instrument in the immediate neighborhood and its ownership placed us in the "first families" in the town group.

But to get back to the soddy story. I liked it because it was written about a time when I was a boy, since the beginning of this century. Don't get me wrong. I like stories of the era from 1870 to 1900, but how about a few yarns about folks and their experiences in the period from 1900 to 1915? I imagine many of your readers would "find themselves" in such stories just as I lived my youth once more in the soddy story. If I live to be 100 (and I hope I will) I'll never forget the daily chore of bringing in coal for the Majestic range and priming the kitchen pump after it froze solid in the below zero winters, and keeping kerosene on hand (we called it coal oil) to keep the "Old Trusty" incubator fired up for hatching and the brooder which kept the little chicks warm.

My father was a native Nebraskan, born in 1871 in a cellar-type home just outside the town of David City. He and his parents (and nine sisters and brothers) moved to Scotts Bluff County in May, 1887. Father taught school, was County Superintendent of Public Instruction, County Judge and a practicing lawyer.

Keep on publishing those fine stories.

(Continued on page 72)

ALL STORY CONTRIBUTIONS should be addressed to Maverick Publications, Inc., 33 South Grove Street, Freeport, N.Y. 11520

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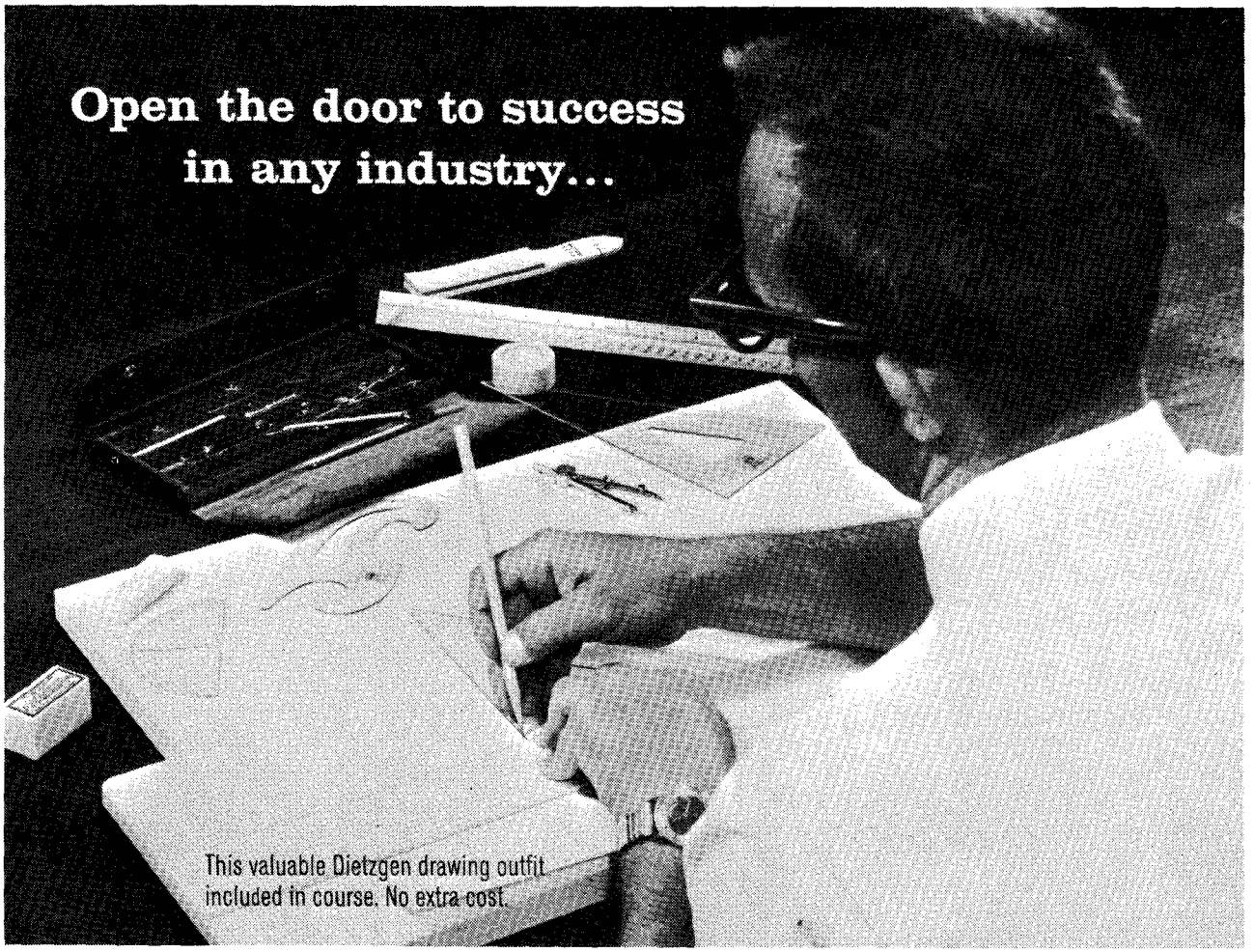

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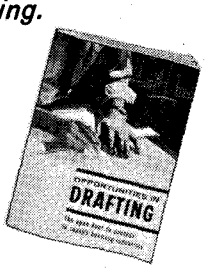

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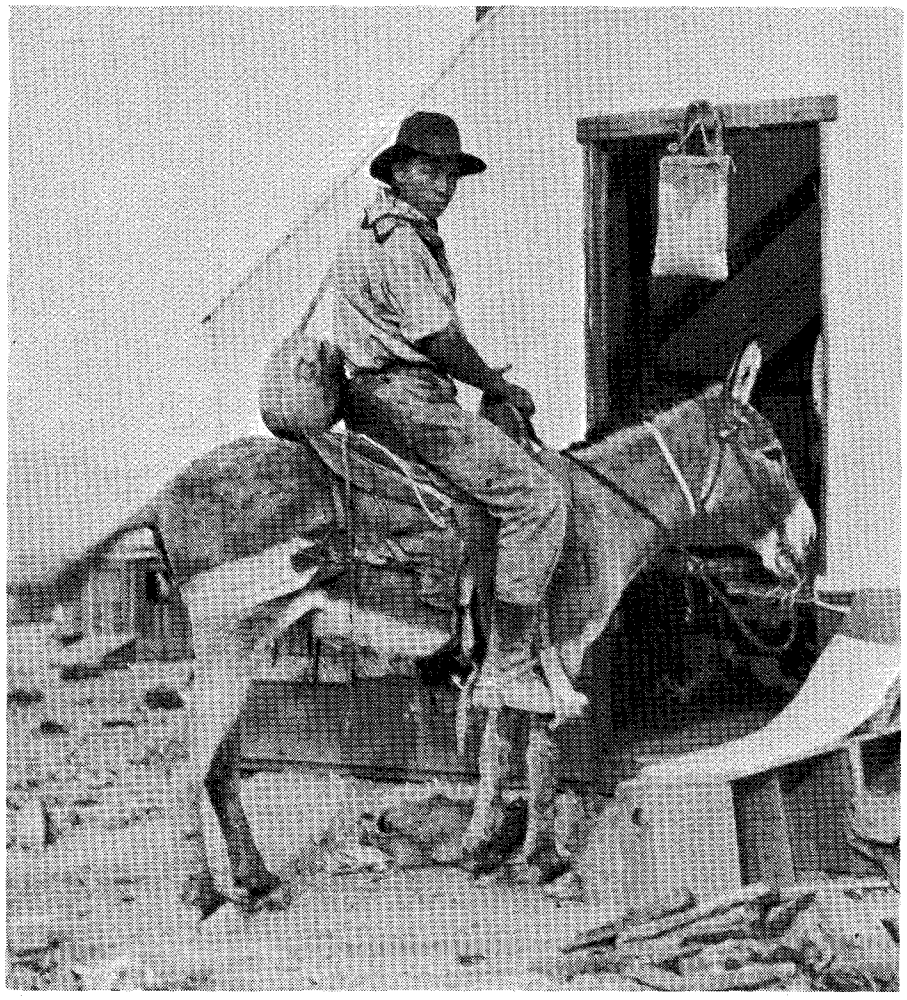
WHEN SHAKESPEARE CAME TO TOWN

The stranger bought a bucket of beer, took it outside and told his burro to "drink up."

by R.M. Starry
as told by Ed Teagle

Author's Photo



Pail after pail of beer was shared by the prospector and his burro.

When word got around in 1898 that a gold bonanza had been discovered on the east side of California's Mojave Desert my brother and I moved in to set up a general store at Johannesburg, the railhead.

Men were pouring into the area. Experienced or not, they searched the Rand and El Paso Mountains in hopes of finding their own bonanza. Equipment of all kinds was in great demand and soon we were freighting supplies as far as Death Valley.

Prospectors came and went. No one paid much attention to a stranger in town and he was seldom missed when he left. Our store was a busy place, so there was no special interest created when a stocky, blond fellow tied his burro to the rail out front and came in to buy a half gallon tin bucket.

There was nothing unusual about his taking the bucket into the bar next door and having it filled with tap beer, but when he came out onto the street and told his burro to "drink up", it did attract attention. Burros were a common sight as they ran loose all over the place; every man and boy had his own burro. The burro at the hitching rail was no usual, shaggy burro, this was a beautiful fawn colored animal.

The miner had the bartender fill the pail until foam rose high around the rim and ran down the sides. Those watching said that he had braced his feet, tipped his blond head back and taken a long drink from the pail. Licking the froth from around his mouth he had said, "Here, have a long cool one", as he placed the pail over the burro's nose.

It was never known whether the burro really took a drink, but the prospector sure turned the air blue when the animal pulled her head out of the beer and snorted, throwing foam all over the fellow and the crowd. To the amazement of all, pail after pail of beer was shared by the man and his burro right there at the rail, with foam flying every time the animal come up for air.

On one of the prospector's trips into the bar, I invited him to have a drink of something stronger than beer and he seemed pleased at the invitation. Others bought drinks and soon conversation about mining was flowing freely. The fellow gave no name, and as was the custom of the time, no one asked him, but he did say he and his burro had been five days walking from his mine in the Panamint Mountains.

By ten that evening the bar was crowded. There must have been at least forty or fifty at the poker tables, not counting the watchers and the drinkers. Suddenly the sturdy, blond haired prospector moved away from the bar and started reciting bits from Shakespeare in a deep, clear voice. Silence enveloped the room as everyone was caught up in the emotional rendition. That fellow gave a performance that needed no stage, no lights, no costume; the characters really came alive. At 2 a.m. he stopped as suddenly as he had started. Further drinks were no inducement toward his continuing.

It was a memorable evening and we felt that culture had walked right into our little mining community. Mining is hard work and every man in the place had been working long hours, seven days a week with little entertainment except the saloon brawls at night and an occasional Saturday night dance.

The fellow left the next morning after picking up the supplies he wanted. Since he had given no name it was natural that people began referring to him as Shakespeare. There was a lot of wondering about where his mine was located and people took sides on the question as to whether or not he had been a

(Continued on page 46)

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STRANGE LIFE OF

Kidnaped by Apaches, he was raised as an Indian and grew up to be a scout and interpreter for the United States Army

No one can be sure about his name. Most people say it was Mickey Free. Others call him Mickey Ward because his stepfather's name was John Ward. It's possible the last name was Tellez.

His story begins on a day in October, 1860, when a band of Pinal Coyotero Apaches under the leadership of Pedro the Notorious was on a raid in the southern part of New Mexico Territory, now Arizona.

Mickey was living with his Mexican mother and Irish stepfather on a ranch near the Sonoita River twelve miles from Fort Buchanan. Ward was away in the Santa Rita Mountains and Mickey was tending the livestock, which was what the renegade Indians were after.

It was Mickey's youth that saved his life. (He was somewhere between six and twelve years old. There is disagreement about his age.) Indian raiders seldom took adult male prisoners. They wanted only women and children because the boys could be trained to be warriors and the captured females became, unfortunately, abused slaves.

One of the renegades pulled the youth up on his horse behind him and took him back to the Indian camping grounds on the Gila River along with John Ward's cattle.

This kidnaping was blamed on Cochise, who denied it vehemently. Many historians claim the Apache chief had been a good Indian, anxious to have his people live in peace with the white settlers, up to that point. They say that the unwarranted accusation of a blundering young second lieutenant, George N. Bascom, changed Cochise into a blood-thirsty devil. Other experts insist the Apache chief was a bad Indian from the start and used the Bascom affair as an excuse to go on the warpath. Whatever the facts, Cochise and his Apaches brought about unprecedented Indian trouble that did not end until President Grant sent a special envoy, General Oliver Otis Howard, to make peace.

Mickey Free's story following the kidnaping is so entwined with fact, legend and fiction that it is almost impossible to separate them.

This writer has spent a great deal of time researching the youth's story, and in this connection wishes to acknowledge indebtedness to Mr. C. M. Palmer, Jr. of Tucson, Arizona, who wrote Mickey Free's story in 1950. Mr. Palmer's scholarly study is now in the files of the Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society. This manuscript is of inestimable value to all interested in Mickey Free.

As was the custom with the Indians, the kidnaped boy was given over to one of the families to be raised as a warrior. This family had a boy of its own named Tlol-dil-xil. Translated into English it was John Rope.

An article in the *Arizona Historical Review* for January, 1936, titled "Experiences of an Indian Scout" contains excerpts from the life of John Rope saying that he and Mickey Free grew up as brothers and that Mickey had long red hair. John Rope became a scout for the Army and later an Indian policeman at the San Carlos Reservation, as did Mickey Free.

Much speculation has arisen concerning how the kidnaped boy got his name. Mr. Palmer, the Tucson writer already mentioned, questioned Judge Donald

Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society Photos

Cochise was blamed when Apaches stole cattle and kidnaped a boy.

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MICKEY FREE

by Louise Cheney

MacIntosh of the tribal council at San Carlos Reservation. MacIntosh said his father had told him how the boy got his name. According to the judge's father the name Mickey came about because the stepfather, John Ward, was an Irishman and Mickey is a very common first name in Irish families. Also the youth was largely free to come and go as he pleased. Thus the name Free was added.

The last name "Ward" came about through the boy's connection with his stepfather, John Ward.

Santiago Ward, the stepfather's other boy, claimed Mickey's real father was a blond Mexican by the name of Tellez who had blue eyes, fair skin and light colored hair. He insisted Mickey had eyes and hair like his Mexican father.

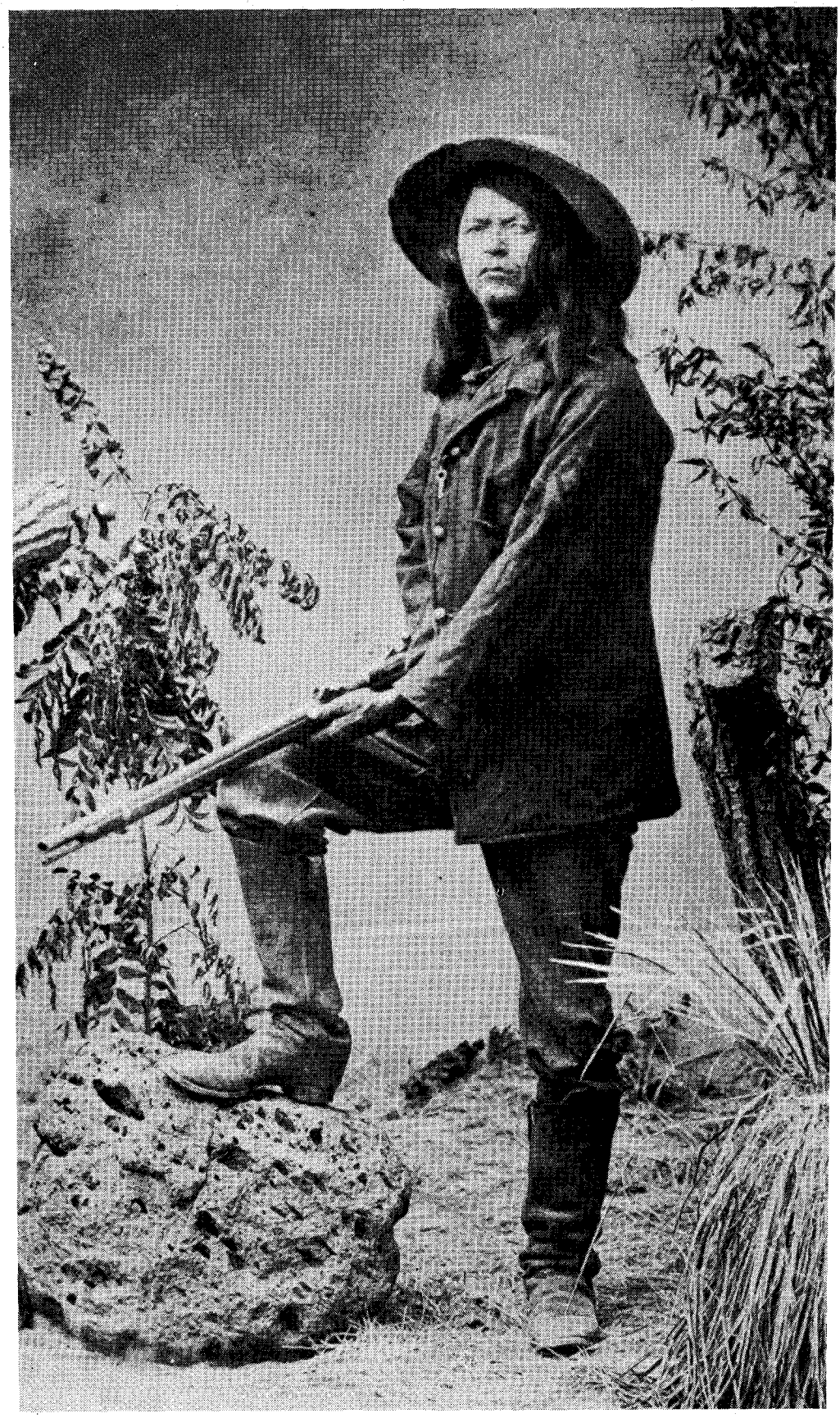
Over the 106 years since his kidnaping Mickey has been given credit for four fathers, namely the blond Mexican, an Apache warrior and two Irishmen: one named Ward and the other one named Hughes. Since everyone agrees that Mickey had blue eyes and light hair, either red or brown, it is logical to assume that there was no Apache blood in his heritage. It is unanimously agreed that his mother was a Mexican, but she has been credited with two maiden names, Martinez and Salvador.

Charles Connell, writing in the magazine *Arizona* in 1906, said Mickey was six years old when he was taken by the raiding Apaches. He thought the boy's Mexican mother's name was Jesus Salvador.

The same article said Jesus Salvador was one of three Mexican women kidnaped by Pinal Apaches when a Mexican wagon train was ambushed just below the border and that Jesus was the maid servant of a Mexican lady, Inez Gonzalez. Jesus was held by the Pinals but Inez was sold to itinerant traders and later rescued by officers of the United States Boundary Commission and returned to her home in Mexico.

Connell said that a Pinal Apache took Jesus as his wife and that she gave birth to a son who was later known as Mickey Free. When the child was a year old she escaped from her captors, reached some friendly Pimas and was helped by them to return to her people in Santa Cruz in 1856.

When the Gadsen Purchase was effected the mines in Patagonia near the Sonoita River were reactivated and she and her child came to the vicinity. Jesus hired out as a housekeeper to John Ward whom she later married. It was from Ward's ranch that the boy was kidnaped.



Call him Mickey Free or Mickey Ward, nobody knows his real name.

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Scout Al Sieber did not hesitate to express himself when asked what he thought of Mickey Free.

Regardless of his ancestry, it is a matter of record that Mickey grew up as an Apache brave and absorbed all of the characteristics of those Indians.

Connell tells of an experience he had in 1880 when he was selected to "enumerate the Apaches on the San Carlos Reservation." He wrote that he found Mickey Free to be living the life of a "wild and reckless Apache." Connell was quite prejudiced against the man, calling him an indolent and repulsive creature.

Mickey Free had only one good eye and Connell claimed he had lost the other one in combat with a bear. The man on the reservation was described as of small stature, slim, straight, untidy and shabby. Connell stressed the fact that the afflicted eye gave Mickey a sinister appearance.

Mickey is known to have picked up some English while living on the San Carlos Reservation. He already spoke Apache and Spanish fluently. Because of these qualifications he was given the position of first sergeant of Indian scouts and it is said he did a good job in that capacity.

Despite this, Connell blasted Mickey Free by calling him an "Apache at heart and a cruel warrior and treacherous foe."

Mickey Free's stepbrother, Santiago Ward, learned that he was at the San Carlos Reservation in 1881 and paid him a visit. Santiago Ward asked Mickey to go home with him but Mickey refused. Instead he got a job for Santiago with the government on the reservation and the stepbrother remained there as a scout and policeman for a year.

Santiago Ward claimed that his mother (and Mickey's) was named Jesus Martinez, not Salvador, before her marriage to John Ward.

Tom Horn, also an Indian scout for the Army during the latter part of the Indian wars in Arizona, in his autobiography "The Life of Tom Horn" published in 1904, wrote that he knew Mickey Free quite well. He said Mickey's father was an Irishman named Hughes and claimed the boy was seven years old when kidnaped and that the year was 1862, not 1860.

Horn also wrote that Mickey had a sister who was taken prisoner along with him. The girl was supposed to have been nine years old at the time. This man, like John Rope, said Mickey had long red hair and one good blue eye, the other having been hooked out by a deer when he was twelve years old.

Horn also wrote that Mickey had a small red mustache and a "mug that looked like the map of Ireland," and that he was "considered invaluable in his capacity as a scout, guide and interpreter for the United States Army."

When Horn knew Mickey Free the controversial figure was living in the White Mountain area of the San Carlos Reservation with a large Indian family. He was considered wealthy by Apache standards since he possessed a number of horses, dogs, cattle and squaws.

Horn thought well of the man, admired his ability to serve the Army and did not think him repulsive or sinister as Charles Connell had pictured him.

Britten Davis, a retired United States Army officer of the 3rd Cavalry, told a great deal about Mickey Free in his book "The Truth About Geronimo" published in 1929. This man's opinion is of particular value because he was closely associated with Mickey Free when Mickey was a scout.

Davis described the man as being about five feet, five inches tall, slim but muscular, the son of an Irish father and a Mexican mother. He said Mickey Free had a somewhat sinister appearance caused by the loss of one eye, but that this was misleading because he saw nothing wrong with the scout's character. Davis was of the opinion that Mickey Free had completely absorbed his Apache upbringing and that this was evident in all of his actions. He also stated that the man was married to an Indian squaw.

Davis wrote that Al Sieber, famous chief of scouts for the Army, had such

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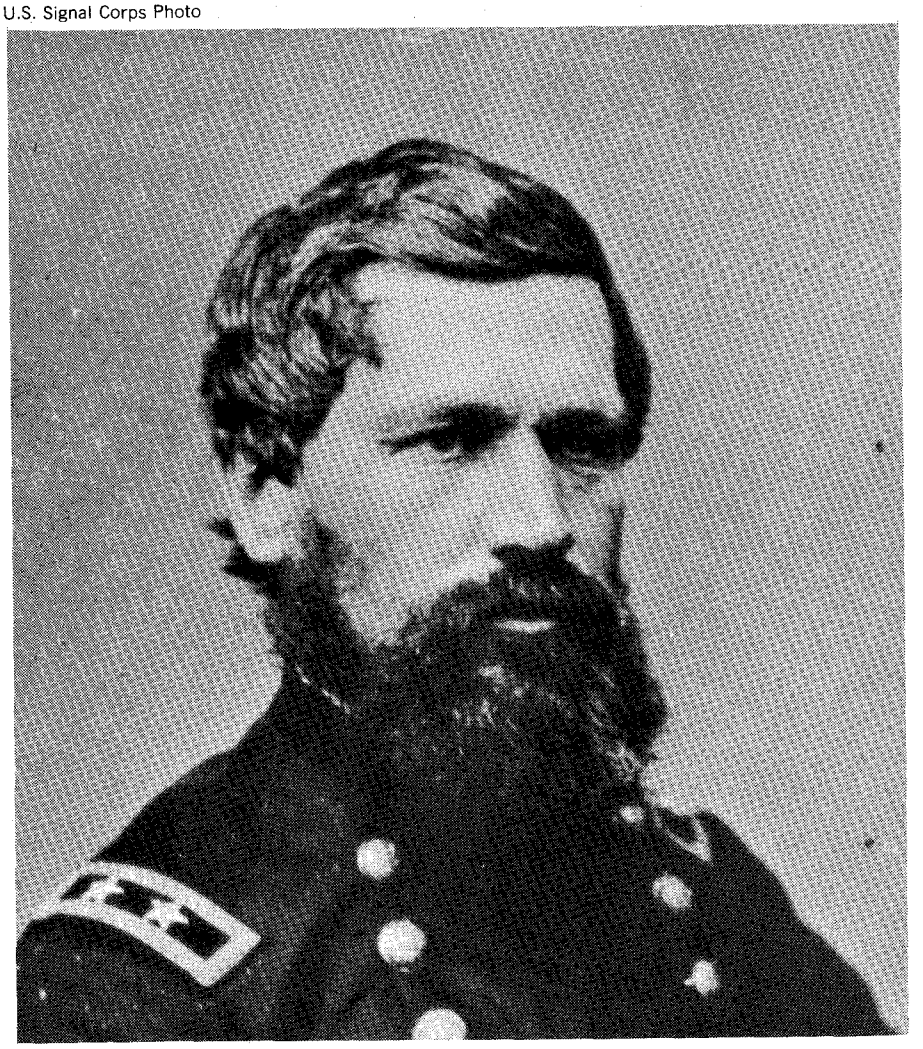
U.S. Signal Corps Photo



General Oliver O. Howard was sent to make peace with Cochise.

a low opinion of Mickey Free that it could not be expressed in polite society. (Sieber is said to have described Mickey Free as "half Irish, half Mexican and whole s.o.b.")

Britten Davis acknowledged that Mickey might have fooled him, but said that if it was the case he never found it out. He did admit that the Chiricahua secret service men on the reservation never trusted Mickey Free.

The fierce Apache Geronimo, generally considered the worst renegade of all the Southwestern Indians, disliked Mickey intensely. It must be remembered, however, that Geronimo and Mickey Free were at odds because Mickey worked for the government that was trying to put an end to the Indian depredations.

It is a matter of record that when the Apache chieftain and General Crook held their conference in the *Canon de los Embudos* in March, 1886, just prior to Geronimo's surrender, the Indian immediately launched into a bitter tirade against Mickey Free. However, it is well known that Geronimo hated many people without cause and was an accomplished liar. There's an old saying: "Geronimo would climb a tree in order to lie when he could have stayed on the ground and told the truth better."

Dr. Frank C. Lockwood in his "Apache Indians" states that in the early sixties Mickey lived with his mother, Jesus Martinez, and her husband, John Ward, and that Ward adopted the boy. Lockwood also confirmed the fact that Mickey Free served the Army as a scout, interpreter and guide under Al Sieber.

Records show that in July, 1886, Mickey Free was part of a delegation of Apaches and whites that went to Washington to try to persuade the United States Government to help the Chiricahuas if the Indians moved without protest from their homes on Turkey Creek Reservation to larger and better holdings provided by the government. The Chiricahuas had been attempting to live as General Crook had so strongly and wisely counseled.

Mr. C. M. Palmer wrote that the Chiricahuas were always under close surveillance by the Army and were treated little better than prisoners of war. He further stated that General Miles, who had succeeded General Crook, wanted to be rid of the Chiricahuas and, along with Secretary of the Interior Lamar, Secretary of War Endicott, President Cleveland and General Sheridan, had just about arrived at the decision to pack them off to Fort Marion in Florida.

The delegation that went to Washington in the Indians' behalf accomplished absolutely nothing as far as the Chiricahuas' welfare was concerned. General Miles worked with the officials in Washington and in the end the red men in the

(Continued on page 52)

Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

Mickey Free lived at the San Carlos Reservation in Arizona with his family for many years.

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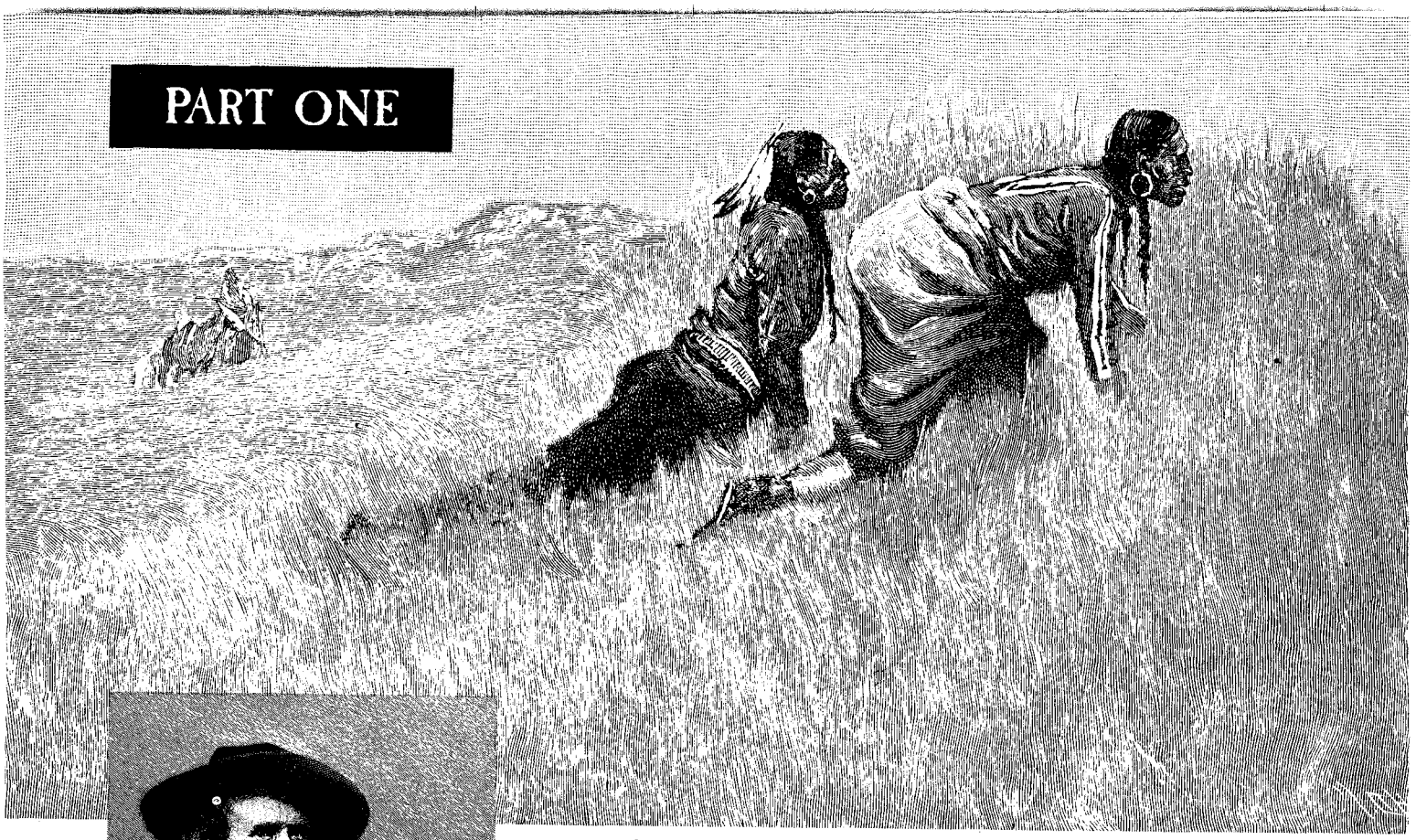
PART ONE



Indian scouts watched every move made by Custer's men.

CUSTER'S LAST BATTLE

General George A. Custer.

After General Custer talked with us, Lieutenants McIntosh, Wallace and myself walked back to our bivouac in silence. Wallace said, "Godfrey, I believe General Custer is going to be killed." "Why," I asked, "what makes you think so?" "Because," he said, "I have never heard Custer talk like that before."

By one of his troop commanders,
E.S. Godfrey, Capt., 7th Calvary

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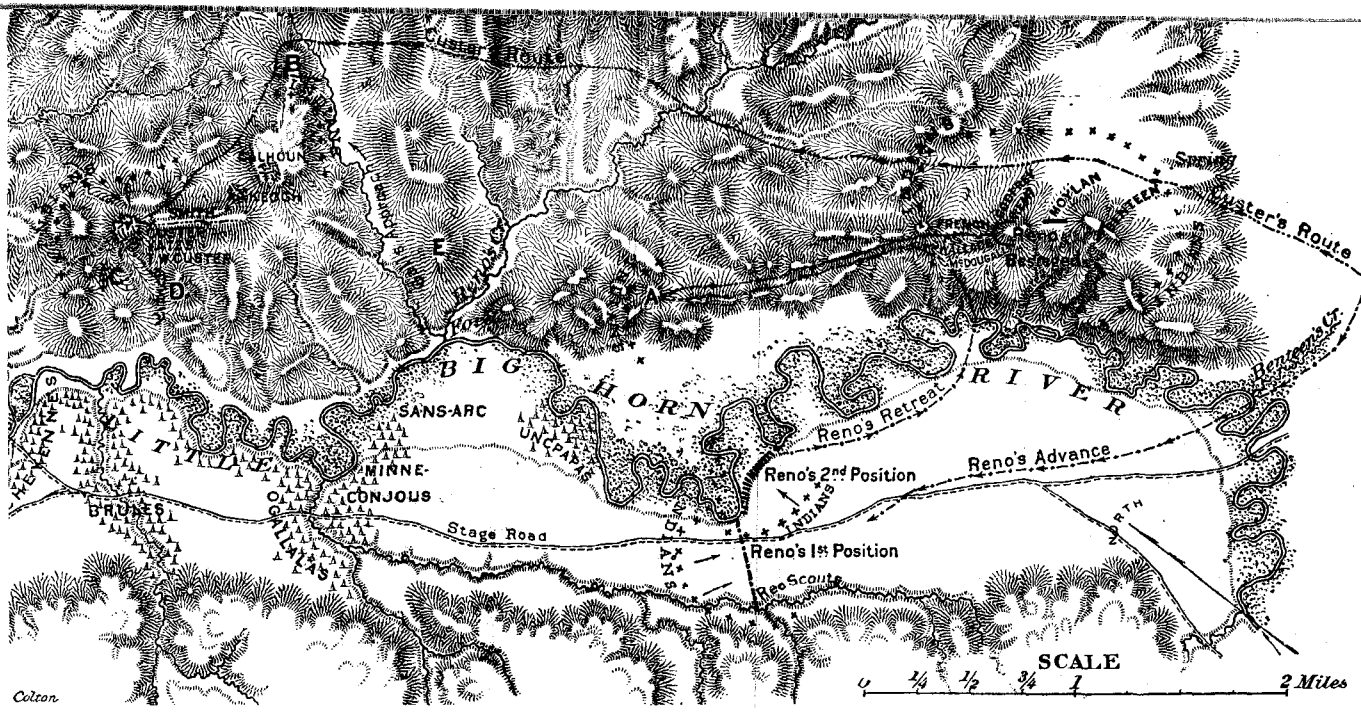

A — Hill where Custer was seen by some of Reno's men during the fight in the valley; also the point reached by Reno's advance after the retreat from the valley, from which he fell back to the position in which he was besieged. B — Here Keogh's and Calhoun's troops dismounted and advanced along the ridge to where the bodies of their commands were found. C — A few bodies mostly from the commands of Yates and T. W. Custer, who for the greater part died with General Custer on the hill above, now known as Custer's Hill, and on which stands the monument shown on page 383. D — Ravine where were found bodies of many of Smith's troop who had formed in line on the ridge between Custer's and Keogh's position; Lieutenant Smith's body was found on Custer's hill. E — Hill where Sergeant Butler's body was found; empty cartridge-shells lay about him. He belonged to Captain Custer's troop, and may have been carrying a message to Reno.

Map shows strategic points in General Custer's last battle.

On the 16th of April, 1876, at McComb City, Missouri, I received orders to report my troop ("K," 7th Cavalry) to the Commanding General of the Department of Dakota, at St. Paul, Minnesota. At St. Paul about twenty-five recruits fresh from civil life joined the troop, and we were ordered to proceed to Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota, where the Yellowstone Expedition was being organized.

This expedition consisted of the 7th United States Cavalry, commanded by General George A. Custer, 28 officers and about 700 men; two companies of the 17th United States Infantry, and one company of the 6th United States Infantry, 8 officers and 135 men; one platoon of Gatling guns, 2 officers and 32 men (of the 20th United States Infantry); and 40 Ree Indian scouts.

The expeditionary forces were commanded by Brigadier-General Alfred H. Terry, the Department Commander, who with his staff arrived several days prior to our departure.

On the 17th day of May, at 5 a.m., the general was sounded, (The signal to take down tents and break camp.) the wagons were packed and sent to the Quartermaster, and by six o'clock the wagon-train was on the road escorted by the infantry. By seven o'clock the 7th Cavalry was marching in column of platoon around the parade-ground of Fort Lincoln, headed by the band playing "Garry Owen," the Seventh's battle tune, first used when the regiment charged at the battle of Washita. The column was halted and dismounted just outside the garrison.

The officers and married men were permitted to leave the ranks to say "good-by" to their families. General Terry, knowing the anxiety of the ladies, had assented to, or ordered, this demonstration in order to allay their fears and satisfy them, by the formidable appearance we made, that we were able to cope with any enemy that we might expect to meet.

Not many came out to witness the pageant, but many tear-filled eyes looked from the windows.

During this halt the wagon-train was assembled on the plateau west of the post and formed in column of fours. When it started off the "assembly" was sounded and absentees joined their commands. The signals "Mount" and "Forward" were sounded, and the regiment marched away, the band playing "The girl I left behind me."

The 7th Cavalry was divided into two columns, designated right and left wings, commanded by Major Marcus A. Reno and Captain F.W. Benteen. Each wing was subdivided into two battalions of three troops each. After the first day the following was the habitual order of march: one battalion was advance-guard, one was rear-guard, and one marched on each flank of the train.

General Custer, with one troop of the advance-guard, went ahead and selected the route for the train and the camping-places at the end of the day's march. The other two troops of the advance-guard reported at headquarters for pioneer or fatigue duty, to build bridges and creek crossings.

The rear-guard kept behind everything; when it came up to a wagon stalled in the mire, it helped to put the wagon forward. The battalions on the flanks were to keep within five hundred yards of the trail and not to get more than half a mile in advance or rear of the train.

To avoid dismounting any oftener than necessary, the march was conducted as follows: one troop marched until about half a mile in advance of the train, when it was dismounted, the horses unbitted and allowed to graze until the train had passed and was about half a mile in advance of it, when it took up the march again; each of the other two troops would conduct their march in the same manner, so that two troops would be alongside the train all the time.

If the country was much broken, a half dozen flankers were thrown out to guard against surprise. The flankers regulated their march so as to keep abreast of their troop. The pack-animals and beef herd were driven alongside the train by the packers and herders.

One wagon was assigned to each troop, and transported five days' rations and forage and the mess kit of the troop; also the mess kit, tents, and baggage of the troop officers and ten days' supplies for the officers' mess.

The men were armed with the carbine and revolver; no one, not even the officer of the day, carried the saber. Each troop horse carried, in addition to the

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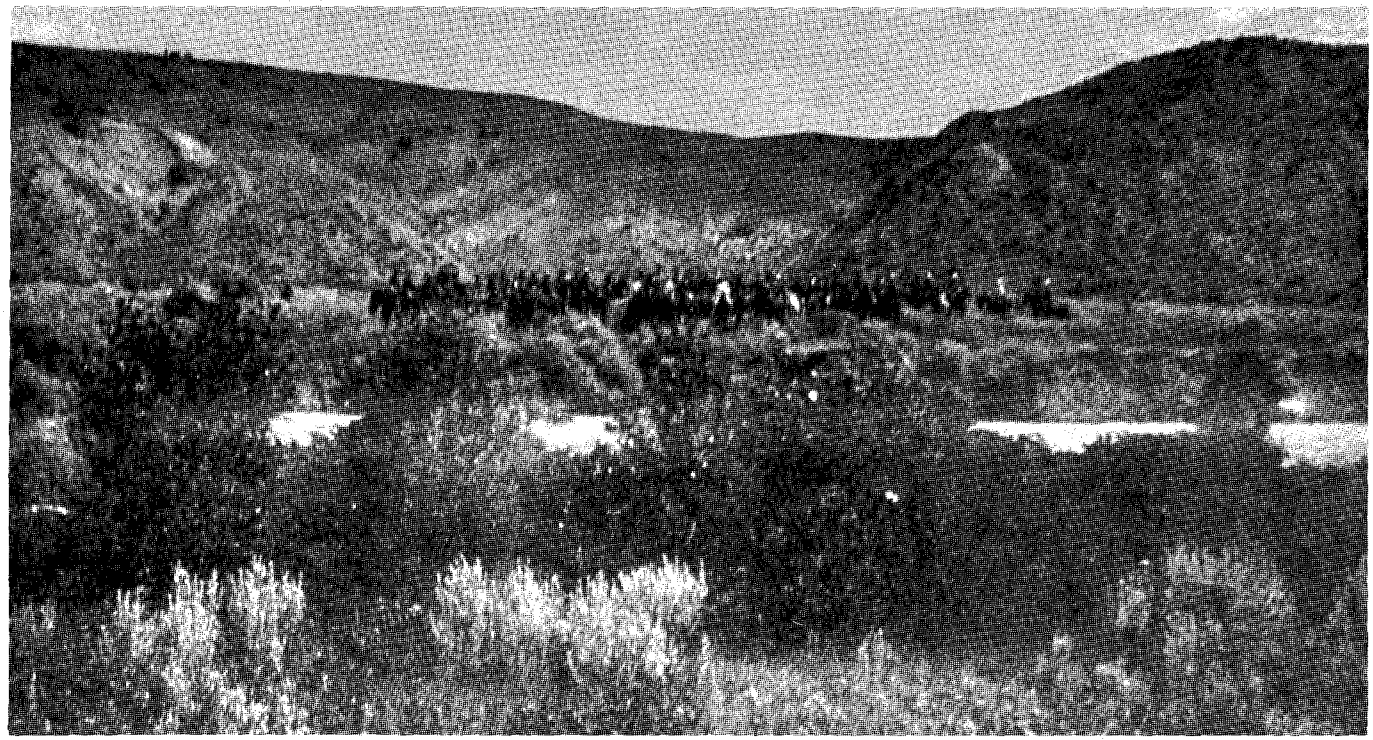

Reno's crossing, in retreat. The bluff where he was besieged is at the right.

rider, between eighty and ninety pounds. This additional weight included all equipments and about one hundred rounds of ammunition..

The wagon-train consisted in all of about one hundred and fifty wheeled vehicles. In it were carried thirty days' supplies of forage and rations (excepting beef), and two hundred rounds of ammunition per man. The two-horse wagons, hired by contract, carried from fifteen hundred to two thousand pounds. The six-mule government wagons carried from three to five thousand pounds, depending on the size and condition of the mules.

The Gatling guns were each hauled by four condemned cavalry horses and marched in advance of the train. Two light wagons, loaded with axes, shovels, pick-axes and some pine boards and scantling, sufficient for a short bridge, accompanied the "pioneer" troops. The "crossings," as they are termed, were often very tedious and would frequently delay the train several hours. During this time the cavalry horses were unbitted and grazed, the men holding the reins. Those men not on duty at the crossing slept, or collected in groups to spin yarns and take a whiff at their "dingy dudeens."

The officers usually collected near the crossing to watch progress, and passed the time in conversation and playing practical jokes. About noon the "strikers" who carried the haversacks were called, and the different messes had their luncheon, sometimes separately, sometimes clubbing together.

When the haversacks were opened, the horses usually stopped grazing and put their noses near their riders' faces and asked very plainly to share the hardtack; if their polite request did not receive attention they would paw the ground, or even strike their riders. The old soldier was generally willing to share with his beast.

The length of the day's march, varying from ten to forty miles, was determined in a great measure by the difficulties or obstacles encountered by wood, water, and grass, and by the distance in advance where such advantages were likely to be found. If, about two or three o'clock in the afternoon, a column of smoke was seen in the direction of the trail and a mile or two in advance, it was a pretty sure indication that a camp had been selected. The cavalry, excepting the rear-guard, would then cut loose from the train and go directly to camp, the rear-guard would send details to collect fuel and unpack their wagons. This routine was always followed.

The adjutant showed the wing commanders the general direction their lines of tents were to run, and the latter then directed the battalion or troop commanders to their camping-places. Generally one flank of each line would rest near the creek. The general form of the camp was that of a parallelogram. The wings camped on the long sides facing each other, and the headquarters and guard were located at one end nearest to the creek; the wagon-train was parked to close the other end and was guarded by the infantry battalion.

The troops, as they arrived at their places, were formed in line facing inward, dismounted, unsaddled, and, if the weather was hot and the sun shining the men rubbed the horses' backs until dry. After this the horses were sent to water and put out to graze, with side-lines and lariats, under charge of the stable guard. This consisting of one non-commissioned officer and three or six privates. The men of the troop then collected fuel, sometimes wood, sometimes "buffalo chips," often a mile or more distant from the camp.

The main guard, consisting usually of four or five non-commissioned officers and twelve or fifteen privates, reported mounted at headquarters, and were directed to take posts on prominent points over-looking the camp and surrounding country to guard against surprise. Each post consisted of one non-commissioned officer and three privates. The officer of the day, in addition to his ordinary duties in camp, had charge of the safety of the cavalry herds. Sometimes this latter duty was performed by an officer designated as "Officer of the Herd."

To preserve the grazing in the immediate vicinity of the camp for evening and night grazing, all horses were required to be outside of the camp limits until retreat. When the train arrived, the headquarters and troop wagons went directly to the camping-place of their respective commands. The officers' baggage and tents were unloaded first; then the wagons went near the place where the troop kitchen was to be located, always on that flank of the troop farthest from headquarters. The teamsters unharnessed their mules and put them out to graze, and the old stable guard reported to the troop commander for fatigue duty to put up the officers' tents and collect fuel for their mess.

The troop officers' tents were usually

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placed twenty-five yards in the rear of the line of men's tents and facing toward them. Their cook or mess tent was placed about ten or fifteen yards further to the rear. The "striker" made down the beds and arranged the "furniture," so to speak, which generally consisted of a camp-stool, tin wash-basin, and a looking-glass.

The men put up their tents soon after caring for their horses. The fronts of their tents were placed on a line established by stretching a picket-rope. The first sergeant's was on that flank of the line nearest to the headquarters. The horse equipments were placed on a line three yards in front of the tents. The men were not prohibited from using their saddles as pillows.

A trench was dug for the mess fire, and the grass was burned around it for several yards to prevent prairie fires. After this the cooks busied themselves preparing supper. Beef was issued soon after the wagon-train came in, and the necessary number of beeves were butchered for the next day's issue; this was hauled in the wagons.

Stable call was sounded about an hour before sunset. The men of each troop were formed on the parade and marched to the horse herds by the first sergeant. Each man went to his own horse, took off the side-lines and fastened them around the horse's neck, then pulled the picket-pin, coiled the lariat, noosed the end fastened to the head halter around the horse's muzzle, mounted, and assembled in line at a place indicated by the first sergeant.

The troop was then marched to the watering-place, which was usually selected with great care because of the boggy banks and miry beds of the streams. After watering, the horses were lariated outside but in the immediate vicinity of the camp. The ground directly behind the troop belonged to it, and was jealously guarded by all those concerned against encroachment by others. After lariating their horses, the men got their curry-combs, brushes, and nose-bags, and went to the troop wagon, where the quartermaster-sergeant and farrier (blacksmith, or veterinary) measured, with tin cups, the forage to each man, each watching jealously that he got as much for his horse as those before him. He then went at once to feed and groom his horse.

An officer and a first sergeant superintended the grooming, examining each horse's back and feet carefully to see if they were all right. When a horse's back got sore through the carelessness of the rider, the man would generally be compelled to lead his horse until the sore was well. Immediately after stables, the cooks loudly announced supper. The men with haversack and tin cup went to the mess fire and got their hardtack, meat, and coffee. If game had been killed the men did a little extra cooking themselves.

The troop officers' mess kits consisted of a sheet-iron cooking-stove, an iron kettle, stewing, frying, baking, and dish pans; a small Dutch oven, a camp-kettle, a mess-chest holding tableware for four persons, and a small folding-table.

The table in fair weather was spread in the open air. The early part of the meal was a matter of business, but after the substantials were stowed away, the delicacies were eaten and time found for conversation. After supper the pipes were lighted, and the officers, if the weather was cold, went to the windward side of the camp-fire. Each man as he took his place was sure to poke or kick the fire, turn his back, hitch up his coat-tail, and fold his hands behind him.

Retreat was sounded a little after sunset and the roll was called, as much to insure the men having their equipment in

Frederic Remington

The signals "Mount" and "Forward" were given and the regiment was on its way.

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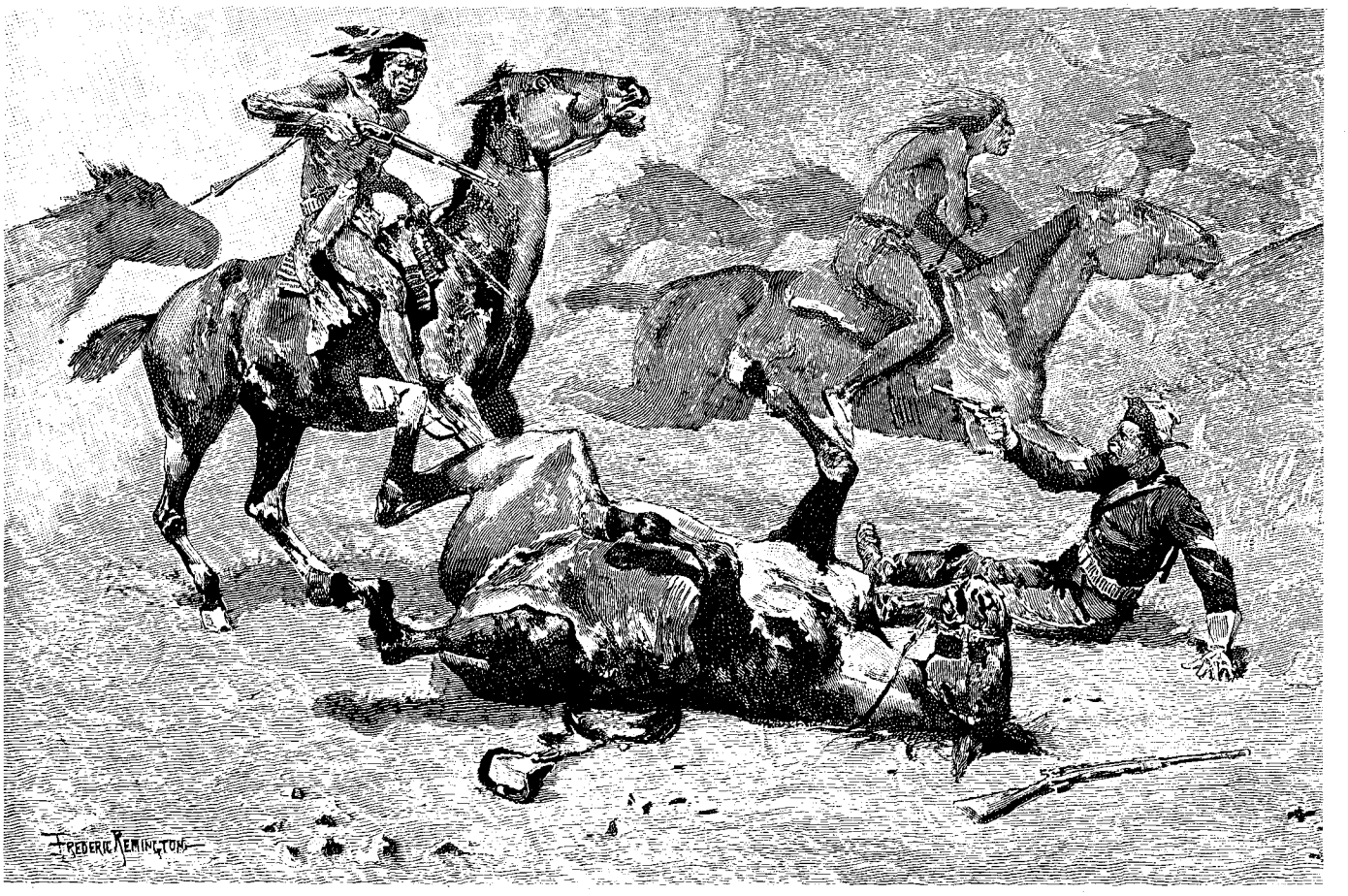

Close quarters fighting resulted in many soldiers being unhorsed when the Indians attacked.

place as to secure their presence, for it was not often we were near enough to any attraction to call the men away. (In 1876 there was not a ranch west of Bismarck, Dakota, nor east of Bozeman, Montana.)

The stable guards began their tours of duty at this time. The non-commissioned officer reported to the troop commander for instructions for the night; these usually designated whether the horses were to be tied to the picket-line or kept out to graze, and included special instructions for the care of sick or weak horses. At dusk all horses were brought within the limits of the camp. The picket-line was stretched over three wagons in front of the men's tents, or three posts were used when remaining in camp over a day.

During the evening the men grouped about the fires and sang songs and yarns until "taps." The cooks prepared the breakfast, which usually consisted of hard bread, bacon, and coffee. If beans or fresh meat were to be cooked, the food was put into the Dutch ovens or camp-kettles, which were placed in the fire trench, covered over with hot ashes and coals, and a fire built over them. If the wind blew hard all fires were extinguished, to prevent prairie fires.

The cooks were called an hour or an hour and a half before reveille, usually 4:20 a.m.; the stable guard awakened the occupants of each tent and also the officer whose duty it was to attend the roll-call. Stable call followed reveille and was superintended by an officer. This occupied about three-quarters of an hour. Two hours after reveille, the command would be on the march. Of course there were incidents that occasionally relieved the monotony.

Antelope were plentiful and the men were encouraged by troop commanders to hunt them. General Custer had a number of stag-hounds which amused themselves and the command in their futile attempts to catch antelopes. One morning they started up a large buck near where the column was marching; Lieutenant Hare immediately followed the hounds, passed them, drew his revolver, and shot the buck.

Nothing of special interest occurred until the 27th of May, when we came to the Bad Lands of the Little Missouri River.

On the 30th General Custer was sent with four troops to make a scout up the Little Missouri, for about twenty miles. He returned the same day, without having discovered any recent "Indian signs." On the 31st we crossed the Little Missouri without difficulty. On the 1st and 2nd of June we were obliged to remain in camp on account of a snow-storm.

We remained in camp on the Powder River for three days. General Terry went to the Yellowstone to communicate with the supply steamer *Far West*, which was at the mouth of the Powder River. He also went up the Yellowstone to communicate with General Gibbon's command, known as the "Montana Column," composed of four troops of the 2nd Cavalry and several companies of the 7th Infantry. Before General Terry left it was given out that the 7th Cavalry would be sent to scout up the Powder River, while the wagon-train, escorted by the infantry, would be sent to establish a supply camp at the mouth of the Powder.

Eleven pack-mules, saddles, and *aparejos* were issued to each troop for this scout. This was an innovation since neither officers, men, nor mules had had any experience with this method of transportation. There were a few packers (civilian employes) to give instructions. Short, compactly built mules, the best for the purpose, were selected from the teams. A non-commissioned officer and four men of each troop were detailed as packers. After some instruction had been given by the professionals, especially how to tie the "diamond hitch," we concluded to make our maiden attempt by packing two empty water-casks.

The mule was blinded and he submitted, with some uneasiness, to the packing. We supposed the packs were securely fastened and did not anticipate any trouble; but it is always the unex-

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LIEUTENANT W. W. COOK, ADJUTANT.

LIEUTENANT W. VAN W. REILY.

LIEUTENANT J. J. CRITTENDEN.

LIEUTENANT JAMES CALHOUN,
COMMANDING TROOP "L."

LIEUTENANT A. E. SMITH,
COMMANDING TROOP "E."

LIEUTENANT H. M. HARRINGTON.

LIEUTENANT J. E. PORTER.

LIEUTENANT J. G. STURGIS.

Portraits of officers who died with General Custer at the Little Big Horn.

pected that happens with a mule. The blind was lifted; the mule gave a startled look first to one side, then to the other, at the two casks bandaged to his sides. He jumped to one side, causing to rattle a bung-plug that had fallen inside one of the casks. This startled him still more, and with head and tail high in the air he jumped again. He snorted and brayed, bucked and kicked, until the casks fell off. One was fastened to the saddle by the sling-rope. He now began to run, braying and making such a rumpus that the camp turned out as spectators.

The affair excited serious concern lest all the animals in camp would be stampeded. When the cask was loose we got him back and made a second attempt with two sacks of grain. These he soon bucked off and then regaled himself with the spilled grain. As a final effort we concluded to try the *aparejo,* and pack two boxes of ammunition. This done, the mule walked off with as little concern as if he had been a pack-mule all his life.

General Terry having returned, orders were issued on the 10th for the right wing—six troops—under Major Reno, to make a scout up the Powder, provided with twelve days' rations.

The left wing was ordered to turn over all forage and rations; also the pack-mules, except four to each troop. Major Reno left at 3 p.m., and the next day the rest of the command marched to the mouth of the Powder. My troop was rear-guard, and at times we were over three miles to the rear of the wagon-

(Continued on page 56)

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MASSACRE At Red Butte

"Jest don't get any fool notions thet they won't be back," the sergeant warned. "Them ain't jest any Injuns out there. Them's Cheyennes!"

Kansas State Historical Society

Sgt. Custard was trying to get his supply train back to the fort.

by L. Berger Copeman

Hard-faced, battle-scarred old Sergeant Amos J. Custard had been adamant, utterly unyielding, in his fierce determination to "push through to the fort," as he put it, with his little five-wagon train, "in spite of all the Indians this side of hell!"

The fort was the small garrison at Platte Bridge Station situated at a broad bend in the North Platte River where the famous old Oregon Trail crossed the usually placid stream before continuing on its way westward. The time was late July, 1865.

"You fellers stay here and be killed if you want to," he had flung back derisively at the thirty-odd men on the regular "wire-patrol," holed up on a small peninsula in the river near Red Butte. "But if you want to be safe, go with us. We'll git through or go to hell a-tryin'!"

A low, rumbling boom that echoed and re-echoed among the red sandstone bluffs bordering the narrow plateau across which the cumbersome wagons were toiling at the moment, brought Corporal James Shrader to Custard's side at full gallop.

"What was that?" he demanded, bringing his rearing mount down off its hind legs in a shower of small stones and flying sand.

Custard, his features grim, pointed up ahead to where a number of mounted Indians could be seen milling about. "I don't rightly know," he replied tersely. "But if it's what I think it is, we're in for big trouble."

He swung in his saddle toward a small knot of troopers who had also ridden up. "Swain! Smith! Ballau!" he called out. "You, too, Summers! Ride on out a-ways with the corporal here and see if you can find out what those red hellions are up to. The rest of you," (this to several teamsters gathering about) "back to your wagons and let's git the hell out of here while the gittin's good!"

The appearance of Shrader's five-man "point" was greeted with more than customary enthusiasm.

As if they had suddenly sprung from the very ground itself, a surging mass of hooting, jeering Cheyenne and Sioux warriors (fresh from the rout and almost total annihilation of Lieutenant Caspar Collin's twenty-five-man detachment near Platte Bridge Station scarcely three hours before) hurled themselves upon the little party in savage fury.

One fleeting glimpse at the horde of red men swarming between them and the wagon train was enough for Corporal Shrader. Drawing his pistol, he gestured with it toward the river, some half a mile away.

"Come on!" he shouted. "Over the river

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Artist Charles Schreyvogel's action-packed painting of the race to the river.

and make for the fort! It's our only chance!"

Low in the saddle, the dust flying from pounding hooves already laced with arrows as their screeching pursuers strove to drop them in their tracks, the fleeing troopers reached the river bank in a close-packed knot: Swain, Summers, and Smith plunging in and lashing their straining mounts toward the opposite shore. Private Ballau's big grey charger went down in a thrashing heap a scant six feet shy of the beckoning water, felled by a lucky shot from one of the few rifles possessed by the red men.

Shrader, riding close behind, pulled up sharply as the unlucky cavalryman flung himself clear. Ashen faced, he reached up and clutched wildly at the corporal's arm. "My God, Jim!" he cried frantically. "What will we do? We'll all be killed!" Then, fumbling at his chest in a futile effort to stem the crimson from a jagged hole just beneath his heart, he slumped down to join his fallen mount in death.

Corporal Shrader waited for no more. With a wild shout, he raked his own mount's flanks with spinning rowels, plunging headlong into the chilling current, just as Private Edwin Summers took the full force of a heavy rifle slug squarely between the shoulders to slip from his saddle and sink beneath the swirling water without a sound.

With a muttered exclamation of helpless dismay, Shrader thrashed ashore to join the other two survivors of the brief, though costly, encounter. There all three abandoned their horses and raced for the shelter of a dense thicket of chaparral nearby.

Their respite was short-lived. They had only progressed a few hundred yards when they unexpectedly blundered into four or five equally startled braves who had decided that it would be better to seek out the cause of all the uproar across the river than it would be to try to lure any more soldiers from the fort.

Which of the two parties, Indians or troopers, had been the more surprised, it would have been difficult to decide. Suffice to say that, thanks to the corporal's insistance that they pause long enough in their flight to withdraw the water-logged charges from their pistols, and replace them with fresh, dry loads, the ensuing action was sharp, brief, and disasterous... for the red men.

In but a few seconds of murderous fire exchanged at almost point-blank range, two of them were dead. One, Left Hand, being none other than the brother of the exalted Cheyenne war chief, Roman Nose!

The rest made the most of the general confusion to dash for some cover on the opposite side of the ravine, where they quickly disappeared.

The harried troopers had little inclination to stop and congratulate one another upon their "victory." Losing little time in scrambling out of sight themselves, they were soon once more working their way toward the fort. But the undergrowth was thick, and with the sun long since obscured by a low-lying bank of slowly drifting clouds, it wasn't long before they were hopelessly lost.

Corporal Shrader, finally deciding to reconnoiter a bit, climbed to the crest of a small rise, just as an Indian did the very same thing, not a hundred yards away!

A rifle cracked. A nerve shattering cry of savage triumph rent the still air, and the corporal's blue-clad figure first slumped forward, then slowly slid back down the slight incline, into the arms of his dismayed companions.

Fortunately, he was only stunned. The red man in his haste had aimed just the barest fraction of an inch too high. His bullet had only grazed the top of the corporal's head, and he was quickly brought around by the simple expedient of dashing water in his face.

It was as they were working their way through the last ravine between them and the fort that the inevitable finally happened. They clashed head-on into some twenty or more savages who had been patiently lying in wait for them at the far end of the same ravine!

But, this time, help was close at hand. The gates of the fort swung open, and a score of shouting infantrymen alerted by a keen-eyed sentry who had seen their plight from the stockade's north bastion poured forth, scattering the red men with

(Continued on page 44)

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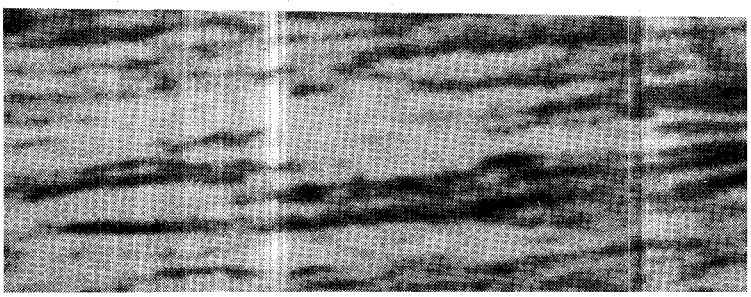
There's S



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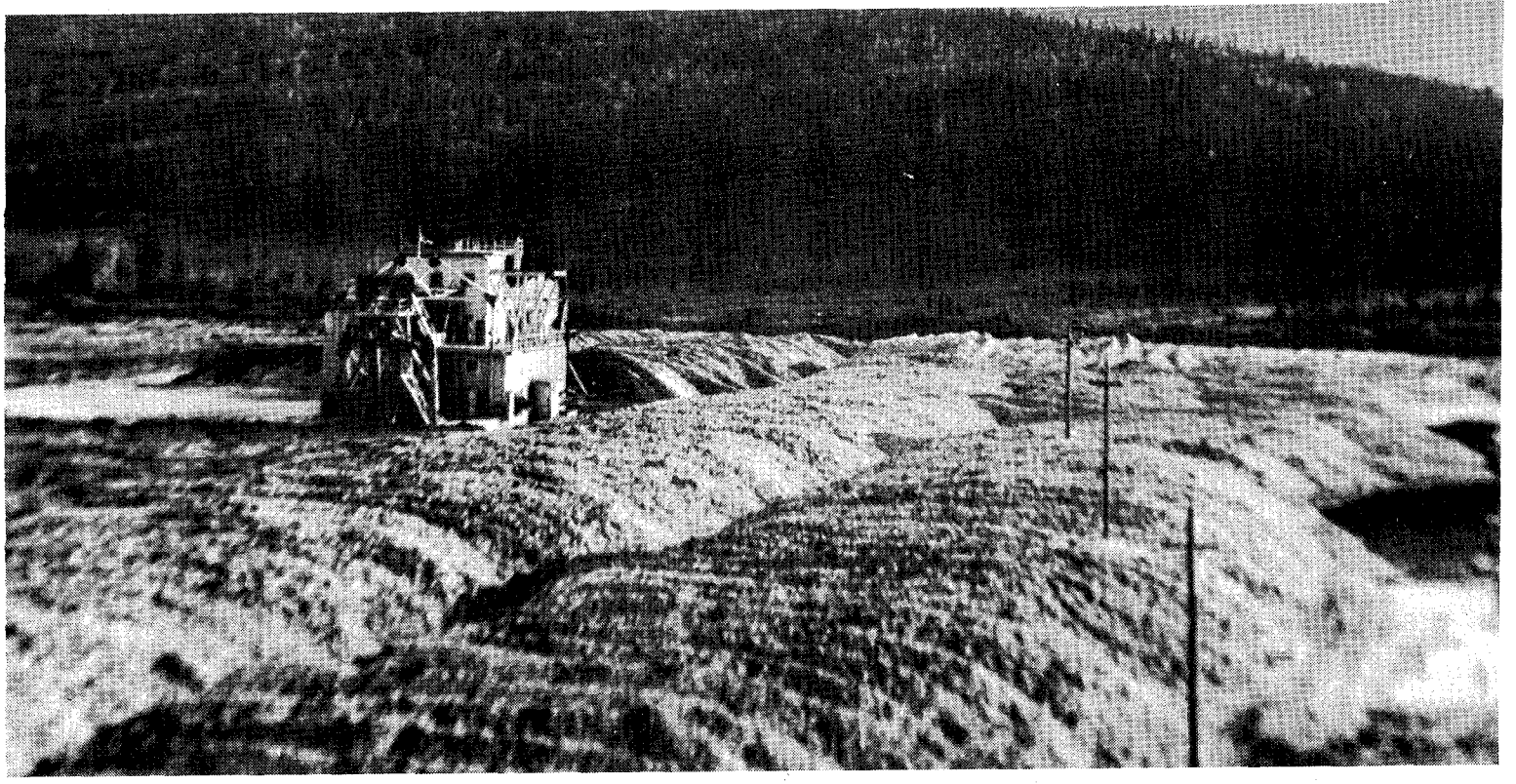
IN THE KLONDIKE



Yukon Consolidated Gold Corp. dredges take out more than $2,000,000 in dust annually from creek beds.

Men come and go, seeking El Dorado. They know and I know, somewhere in the little traveled corner of the northern world, in an undiscovered nook or cranny near the Klondike, there is the "Mother" pocket of gold

by Cy Martin

In August of 1896, all up and down the Yukon Valley, the news of George Carmack's strike on Rabbit Creek swiftly spread as though a great wind carried the news through the stunted spruce and birches. Many a man squatting by some nameless creek in the northland heard the tale, dropped his gold pan and headed for the Klondike and Rabbit Creek.

Some did not hear the news, but were just drifting down the Yukon past the mouth of the Klondike. There they saw the boats, tents, the wildly gesturing men. They were unbelieving, but still they joined the clamoring throng as it pushed through the bog and muskeg to Rabbit Creek.

Others pointed dramatically to the water of the Klondike River.

"Someone's working, the water's damned muddy!"

To most, this narrow creek in the wooded hills was just another valley with good surface prospects. Gold, lying in the gravel at the creek's edge, did not mean the valley was rich as Midas.

To find out just how worthwhile the strike would be, some ambitious soul needed to dig, to break his back burning a shaft down to bed rock. Then he had to tunnel and search for the pay streak along the bed rock at the bottom of the alluvial gravel.

These shafts might go down anywhere from fifteen to thirty feet. The muck was hauled to the surface by windlass, a bucketful at a time. Each bucket was washed, panned and studied.

This slow hard work would tell just how much gold there really was on Rabbit Creek.

Prospect digging could tie up a man and his partner for over two months. After doing all this digging, it was still pure guesswork, chance and maybe luck to hit a worthwhile claim. The answer would come with the spring thaw. Then the rushing creek would provide enough of a head of water to wash out the gravel and muck from the shaft.

No one could really say that fall of 1896 just how rich the strike would be. Most of the men who staked their claims on Rabbit Creek during the early days of the "rush" were old time "sourdough" prospectors. They sunk shafts and shoveled gravel on creek after creek and bar after bar throughout the length of the Yukon watershed. None had struck it rich in the past.

This little pup of a stream looked exactly like any other in the Northwest Territory. If anything, it was scrawnier and poorer looking than most. It seemed worthless to them.

They named the creek El Dorado, anyway. To the old sourdoughs it was a gamble just like betting on a horse race. Many old timers staked a claim, then sold out at once for whatever was offered. They got a grub stake and went on searching for other better looking creeks. A few bravely started to burn and dig their way down to bedrock. But, when halfway down, got cold feet and quit. They sold out in a hurry before the "sucker"

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Public Archives of Canada Photo

Looking up French Gulf one sees miles of sluice boxes on No. 17 Eldorado mine.

realized he'd been foolish and changed his mind.

No one knew Rabbit Creek was the richest placer mining area in the world. Every claim numbered from 1 to 40 either side of "Discovery" was worth at least a half a million dollars. Some were worth three million. Even today dredgers are still taking gold out of the worked-over gravel with a profit.

During that first winter, enormous unknown and undiscovered fortunes changed hands as easily as a pack of chewing tobacco. Poor men became millionaires and went broke again without knowing it.

J. Whipple sold Claim #1 Above for a trifle to Skiff Mitchell, a lumber man from California. Mitchell lived in great style and luxury for fifty years on the proceeds.

A Los Angeles streetcar conductor came north when accused of swindling nickels and staked out Claim #8. Two years later he sold out for $350,000 and lived comfortably for the rest of his life.

George Demars sold his half interest in Claim #9 for a mere $800 grubstake in September of '96. Two years later one half of Claim #9 was worth over a million dollars.

Bill Hohns, an old time newspaper man, staked out Claim #12 and sold it a few days later for $500. He considered himself lucky to get a new chance. But, he only sold half of his Claim #12 for the $500. A few months later, he sold the other half for $2500. Three years went by before the claim was called the richest of the entire Klondike. It produced over a million and a half dollars in gold before 1904.

However, the old timer sourdoughs did not strike it rich. It was the "cheechakos" who hit the jackpot.

They searched high up on the benches above the creek bed while the old timers laughed and jeered. No seasoned Yukon prospector would look for placer gold on a hill above the creek. Gold was heavy. It sank into the cracks in the bedrock. How could it rise up and get a hundred feet up hill?

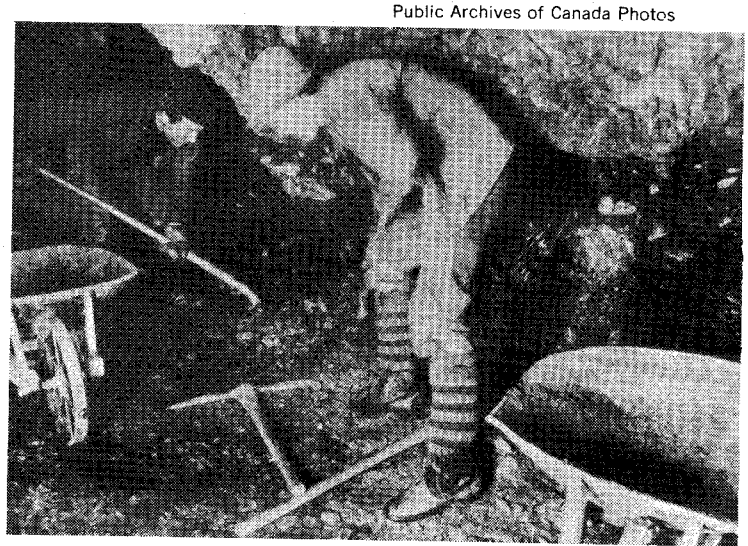
A trained geologist of today would gaze at those terraced hills and know that up above the present streams, older streams once flowed. These streams would contain the most gold.

It was from those old channels that the largest and finest nuggets were mined. The fine flaky gold was washed down into the bed of Rabbit Creek. There it was discovered by Carmacks.

Sourdoughs were gazing at the western rim of Rabbit Creek when they were astonished to see some crazy greenhorns digging away at the muck and dirt at least a hundred feet above the stream bed. On one side was Albert Lancaster, from down California way. On the other, working a bench above Big Skookum were two other newcomers—Nathan Kresge and Nels Peterson.

All three noticed a queer thing about the benches above Rabbit Creek and its pup. Where the miners dragged down winter wood, in the furrows left by the logs they saw a pec-

Public Archives of Canada Photos



No roof support was needed when ground was frozen.

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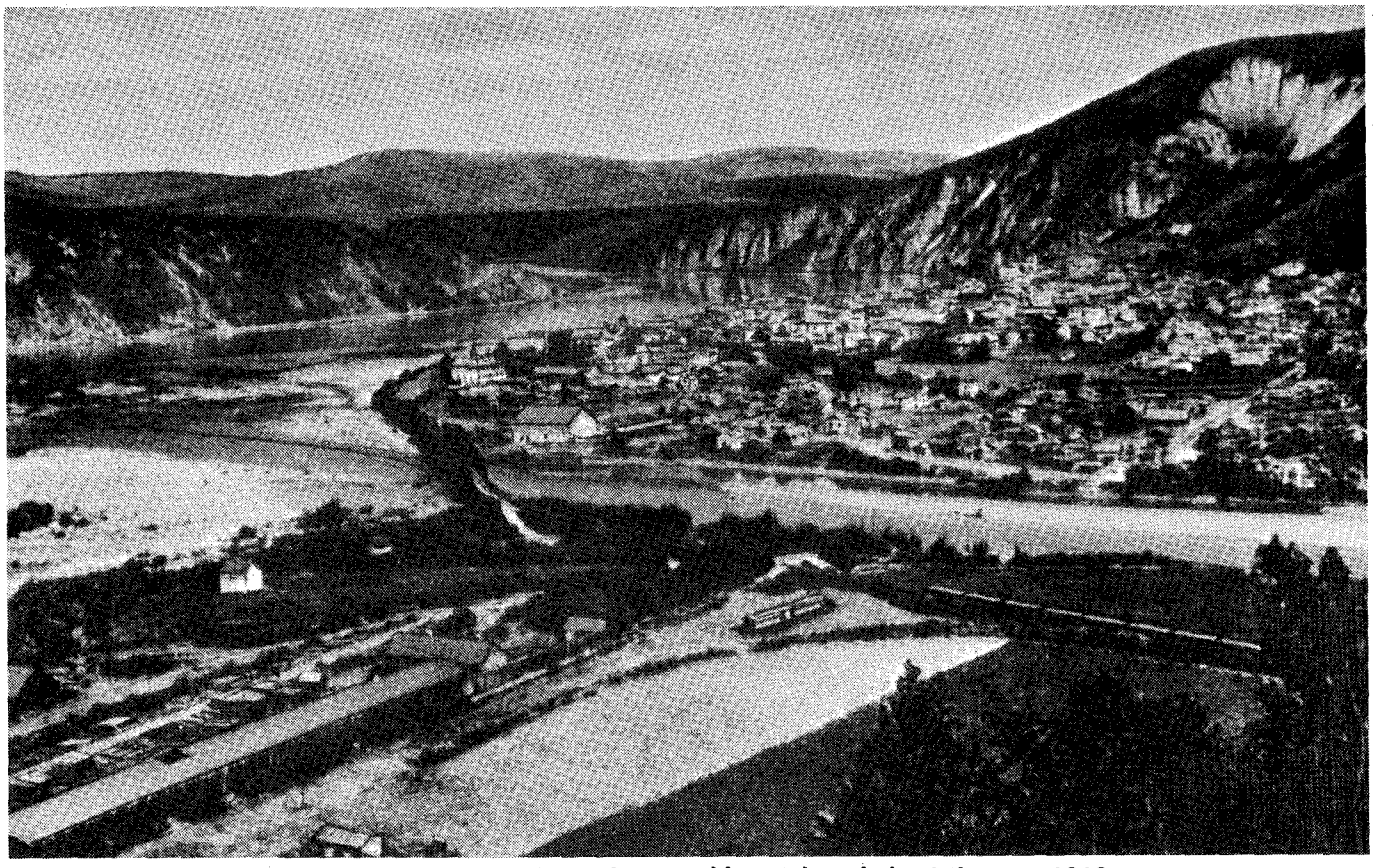


Dawson City as it was pictured on an old postal card about the year 1910.

uliar looking white gravel they hadn't noticed before.

Kresge was a born lucky prospector and had once been a geology student. He started his career of seeking gold as a child in Pennsylvania. This peculiar gravel excited him. So he and his partner began looking around for exposed bedrock along the hillside above Rabbit Creek.

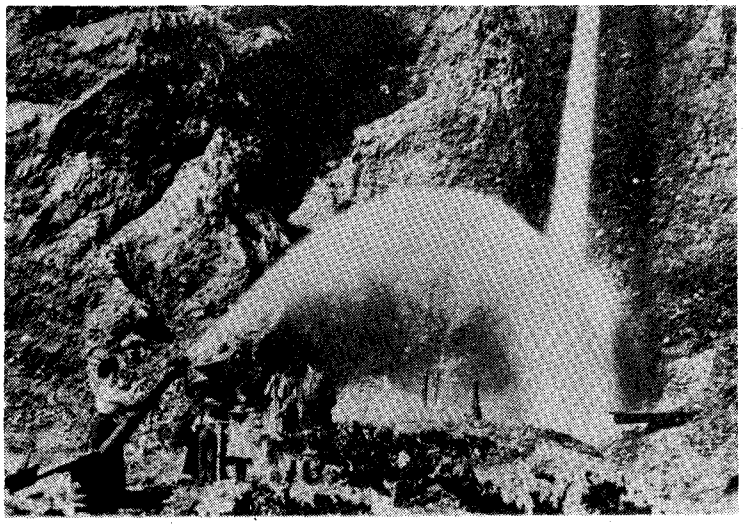
There they sank hundreds of shallow shafts. Then one lucky day, in an eighteen inch deep hole, they found a huge nugget.

This sent them rushing down to Grand Forks where they borrowed a rocker and lugged the awkward contrivance to the top of the ridge.

The old sourdoughs swore and laughed at them.

"Boy, what a bunch of greenhorns they really are!"

Yet, in ten days the pair washed out $6,000 from a piece of ground ten feet by twelve feet square and less than two feet deep.



Girls playing at hydraulic mining in Adams Gulch.

Rabbit Creek was soon re-named Bonanza and the little pup coming from it was El Dorado.

Gold mining on the Klondike was different from that of California, British Columbia and any other milder climate. The ground in most places was permanently frozen from just below the surface to bed rock. It must be thawed before the muck was prospected. This frozen ground or permafrost changed the entire process of placer mining.

No matter, the gold was there. It was thick between the slabs of rock, like yellow cheese between two slices of bread. Often a single pan would yield a quarter of an ounce of the yellow dust. In those days this was worth about $4.00. This was in a country where 20¢ a pan always meant good prospecting. The amount of gold on the Klondike was incredible.

In the fall of '96, Ladue's sawmill was turning out rough lumber for Dawson City's building and for the sluice boxes and rockers on Bonanza and El Dorado Creeks. George Carmacks was treating his friends to drinks at $50. a round. Yet, the old timers continued to jeer at the newcomers scouting the valleys for new ground.

They jeered at Berry and others when they set about the slow work of burning a shaft down through the permafrost to bedrock. On Claim #21 Above, Lewis Rhodes caught more than his share of the laughter as he grubbed his way down through the frozen tundra.

All his neighbors and sourdough friends were giving him a really bad time. When he tried to sell out Rhodes couldn't even find a taker at $250. He sure felt like a fool. On October 3, '96, at fifteen feet, he reached bedrock.

He nearly lost his mind; his excitement knew no bounds. There in the soft rock he saw by the dim light of his miner's candle streaks of clay loaded with gold nuggets.

This was it! He hit the old creek channel squarely on the head. The ground was so rich he hired workmen on the spot. He paid them every night with "dust" from *(Continued on page 53)*

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EARLY DAY

The cry, "Fire! Fire!" struck terror in the hearts of men and women in the Old West

Firehouse between Gold Hill and Virginia City, Nevada.

by Doris Cerveri

Blazing fires usually fanned by strong, gusty winds brought terror and despair to the hearts of men and women in small mining communities and other towns scattered throughout the West when the frontier was being explored and settled. Awakened more than once in the middle of the night by raucous, loud clanging of a fire bell, men rushed out of tents, paper-lined cabins and other flimsy dwellings, half asleep and half dressed.

Most small towns grew so rapidly no particular measures were taken against fire until a serious conflagration occurred which destroyed everything. A small fire in 1868, when the town was but a few months old, spurred Reno, Nevada, citizens to establish their first volunteer fire company. A fire alarm bell was acquired and seven wooden cisterns each holding 1600 gallons of water were constructed and placed in convenient locations. Ninety-five fire buckets were purchased, too, and placed near the cisterns. This crude method of fighting fires proved very ineffective when a tremendous fire destroyed the entire business section with the exception of five buildings on October 26, 1875. Wet blankets were brought out and placed on roofs of buildings, and people barely had time to take their personal possessions to safety.

Property owners raised quite a hullabaloo for a better equipped fire department, and as a result Reno Engine Company No. 1 with 64 members was created on November 10. This company purchased a hand engine with 1000 feet of hose and two carts costing $5000. Fortified with these and Railroad Fire Engine No. 48, the city appeared to be quite will protected. Organization of Washoe County Fire Company followed in July 1877.

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FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Members of the Curry Engine Company in Carson City, Nevada, posed during a demonstration in 1868.

The volunteer fire department of Virginia City, lusty belle of the Comstock Lode, had its origin in a bucket company also. Fires aplenty swept this mining camp because of haphazard building construction and also from a chronic lack of water.

Tom Peasley, owner of the Sazerac Saloon, and paramour of Julia Bulette, queen of the flourishing red light district, is credited with gathering together a group of big, brawny good-natured men in the fall of 1860. Most of them had had previous experience in New York fire companies, and although their training had been in the use of fists, spanners, and fire trumpets, they quickly mastered the new and different kind of fire fighting necessary in Virginia City.

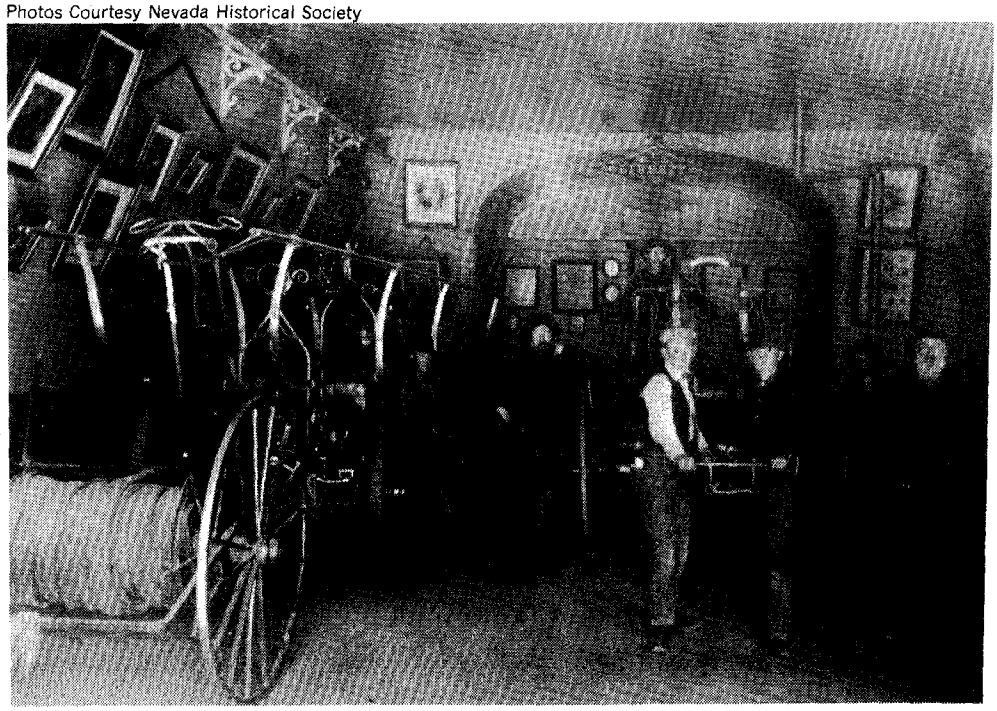
This volunteer group was disbanded the following year when the nucleus of Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 and Virginia Engine Company No. 1 was formed with Tom Peasley as foreman supervising 64 men. Later, when five or six rival companies were organized, Tom was elected chief engineer.

To start with their only equipment was a supply of buckets. They soon prided themselves, however, on having the most powerful apparatus on the Pacific Coast. They bought a magnificent machine from New York featuring 9 inch cylinders, a 7½ inch stroke, 24 foot brakes and 600 feet of hose.

All of the men who were members of these volunteer companies were bursting with exuberant energy. They were a restless, reckless element, but Tom Peasley had strict rules and regulations to harness their high spirits. After organizing the company he collected funds and built a substantial engine house on C Street. He also built a tall, red fire tower high upon Sun Mountain where watchmen kept a vigilant eye on the city day and night. They had specific orders to clang the bell if they spotted a fire of any kind. Tom divided the city into four wards and built up a powerful political unit. This group held their meetings in the engine house.

By 1875 volunteers had disbanded. Reorganization to a paid fire department was radical and complete. A change in the water supply system brought about a drastic difference in fire fighting methods. Pressure at the water mains was increased to such an extent that old hand *(Continued on page 51)*

Photos Courtesy Nevada Historical Society



Interior view of the Gold Hill Fire Company.

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Bubbling Cauldron At Sutter's Fort

The harvest was piled in a huge mound in the middle of a strong, round corral — then three or four hundred wild horses were turned in to thresh it!

by John Bidwell

The party of which I was a member and whose fortunes I have followed across the plains was not only the first that went direct to California from the East, we were probably the first white people, except Bonneville's party of 1833, that ever crossed the Sierra Nevada.

Dr. Marsh's ranch, the first settlement reached by us in California, was located in the eastern foothills of the Coast Range Mountains, near the northwestern extremity of the great San Joaquin Valley and about six miles east of Monte Diablo, which may be called about the geographical center of Contra Costa County.

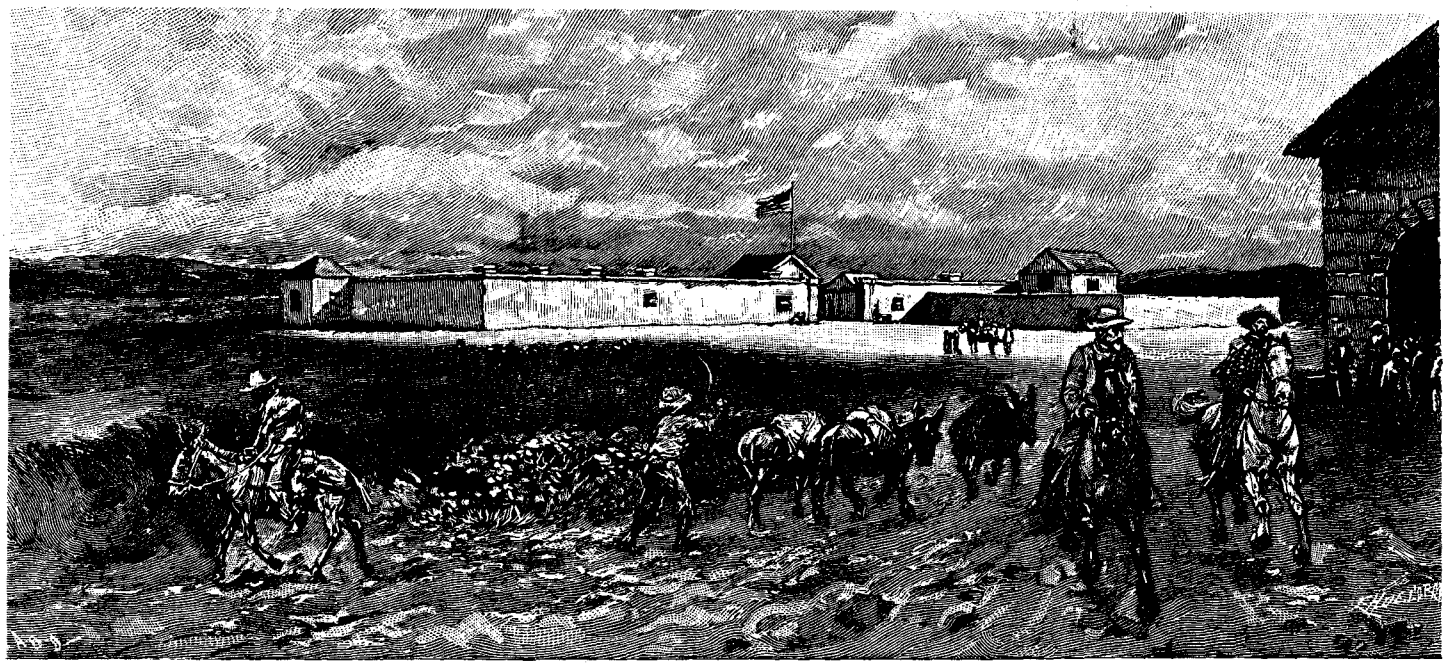
There were no other settlements in the valley. It was, apparently, still just as new as when Columbus discovered America, and roaming over it were countless thousands of wild horses, of elk, and of antelope.

It had been one of the driest years ever known in California. The country was brown and parched; throughout the state wheat, beans, everything had failed. Cattle were almost starving for grass, and the people, except perhaps a few of the most solvent families, were without bread, eating chiefly meat, and that more often than not was of very poor quality.

Dr. Marsh had come into California four or five years before by way of New Mexico. He was in some respects a remarkable man. In command of the English language I have scarcely ever seen his equal. He had never studied medicine, I believe, but was a great reader: sometimes he would lie in bed all day reading, and he had a memory that retained all he read. In those days in California such a man could easily assume the role of doctor and practice medicine. In fact, with the exception of Dr. Marsh there was then no physician of any kind anywhere in California. We were overjoyed to find an American, and yet when we became acquainted with him we found him one of the most selfish of mortals.

The night of our arrival he killed two pigs for us. We felt very grateful, for we had by no means recovered from starving on poor mule meat, and when he set his Indian cook to making tortillas (little cakes) for us, giving one to each—there were thirty-two in our party—we felt even more grateful; and especially when we learned that he had had to use some of his seed wheat, for he had no other.

Hearing there was no such thing as money in the country, and that butcher knives, guns, ammunition, and everything of that kind were better than money, we expressed our gratitude



Sutter's Fort, also known as New Helvetia, in California's Sacramento Valley.

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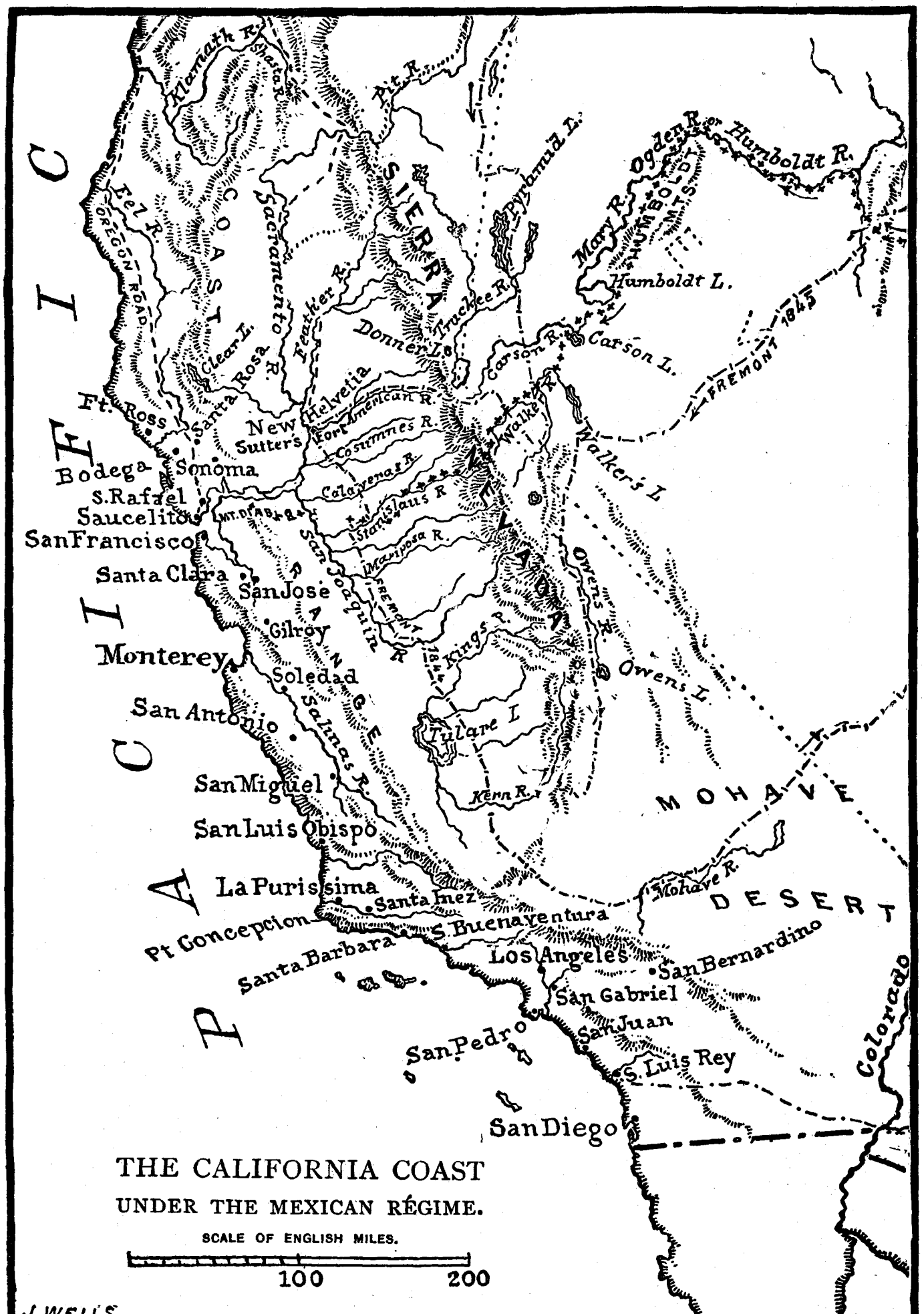

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the first night to the doctor by presents—one giving a can of powder, another a bar of lead or a butcher-knife, and another a cheap but serviceable set of surgical instruments.

The next morning I rose early in order to learn from our host something about California—what we could do, and where we could go—and strange as it may seem, he would scarcely answer a question. He seemed to be in an ill humor, and among other things he said, "The company has already been over a hundred dollars expense to me, and God knows whether I will ever get a *real* of it or not."

I was at a loss to account for this, and went out and told some of the party, and found that others had been snubbed in a similar manner. We held a consultation and resolved to leave as soon as convenient. Half our party concluded to go back to the San Joaquin River, where there was much game, and spend the winter hunting, chiefly for otter, the skins being worth three dollars apiece. The rest—about fourteen—succeeded in gaining information from Dr. Marsh by which they meant to find the town of San Jose, about forty miles to the south, then known by the name of Pueblo de San Jose, now the city of San Jose.

More or less of our effects had to be left at Marsh's, and I decided to remain and look out for them, and meantime to make short excursions about the country on my own account. After the others had left I started off traveling south, and came to what is now called Livermore Valley, then known as Livermore's Ranch, belonging to Robert Livermore, a native of England.

He had left a vessel when a mere boy, and had married and lived like the native Californians, and, like them, was very expert with the lasso. Livermore's was the frontier ranch, and more exposed than any other to the ravages of the horse-thief Indians of the Sierra Nevada.

The valley was full of wild cattle, thousands of them, and they were more dangerous to one on foot, as I was, than grizzly bears. By dodging into the gulches and behind trees I made my way to a Mexican ranch at the extreme west end of the valley, where I stayed all night. It was one of the noted ranches and belonged to a Californian called Don Jose Maria Amador—

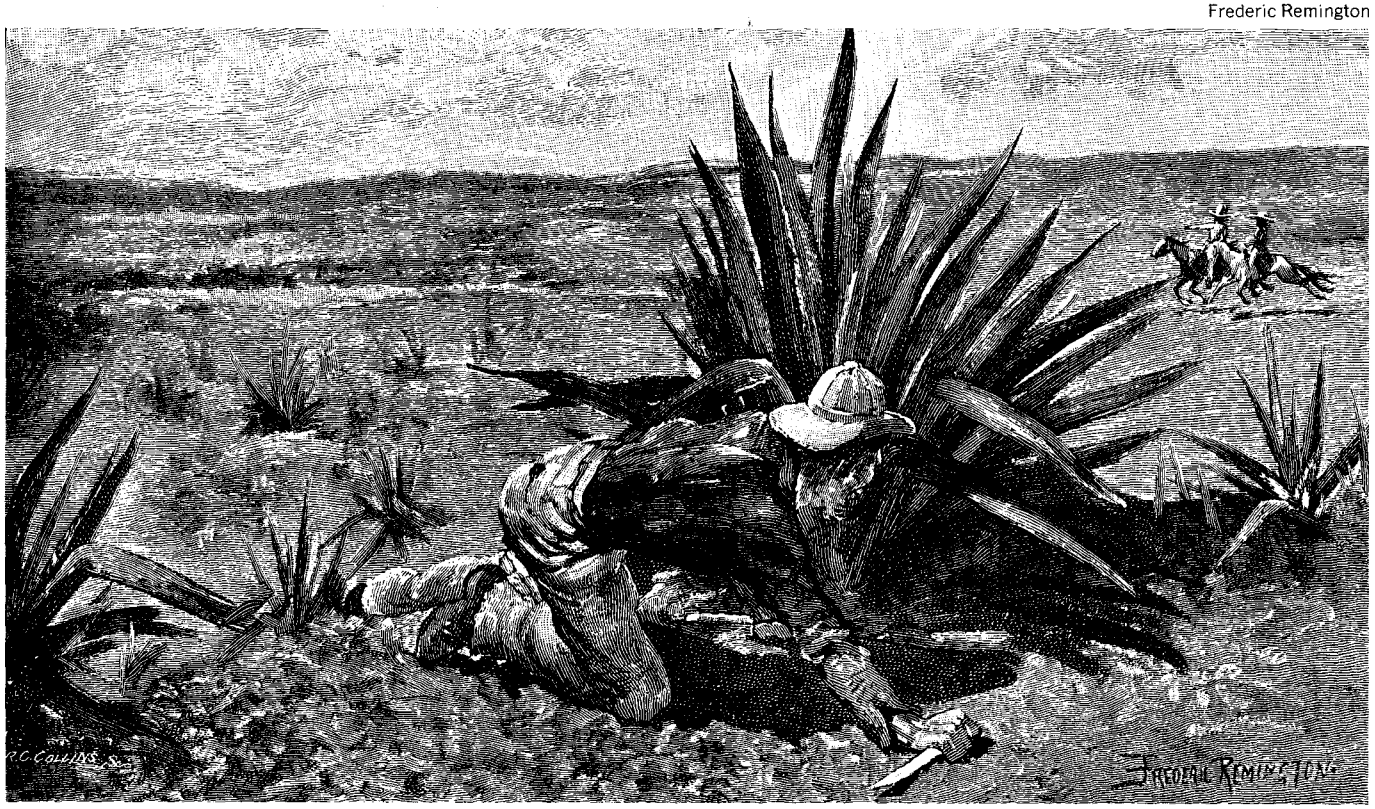
John A. Sutter came to California in 1840.

more recently, to a man named Dougherty.

The rancheros marked and branded their stock differently so as to distinguish them. But it was not possible to keep them separate. One would often steal cattle from the other. Livermore in this way lost cattle by his neighbor Amador. In fact it was almost a daily occurrence—a race to see which could get and kill the most of the other's cattle.

Cattle in those days were often killed for the hides alone. One day a man saw Amador kill a fine steer belonging to Liver-

Frederic Remington



Californians would catch and return runaway sailors to collect rewards offered by ships' captains.

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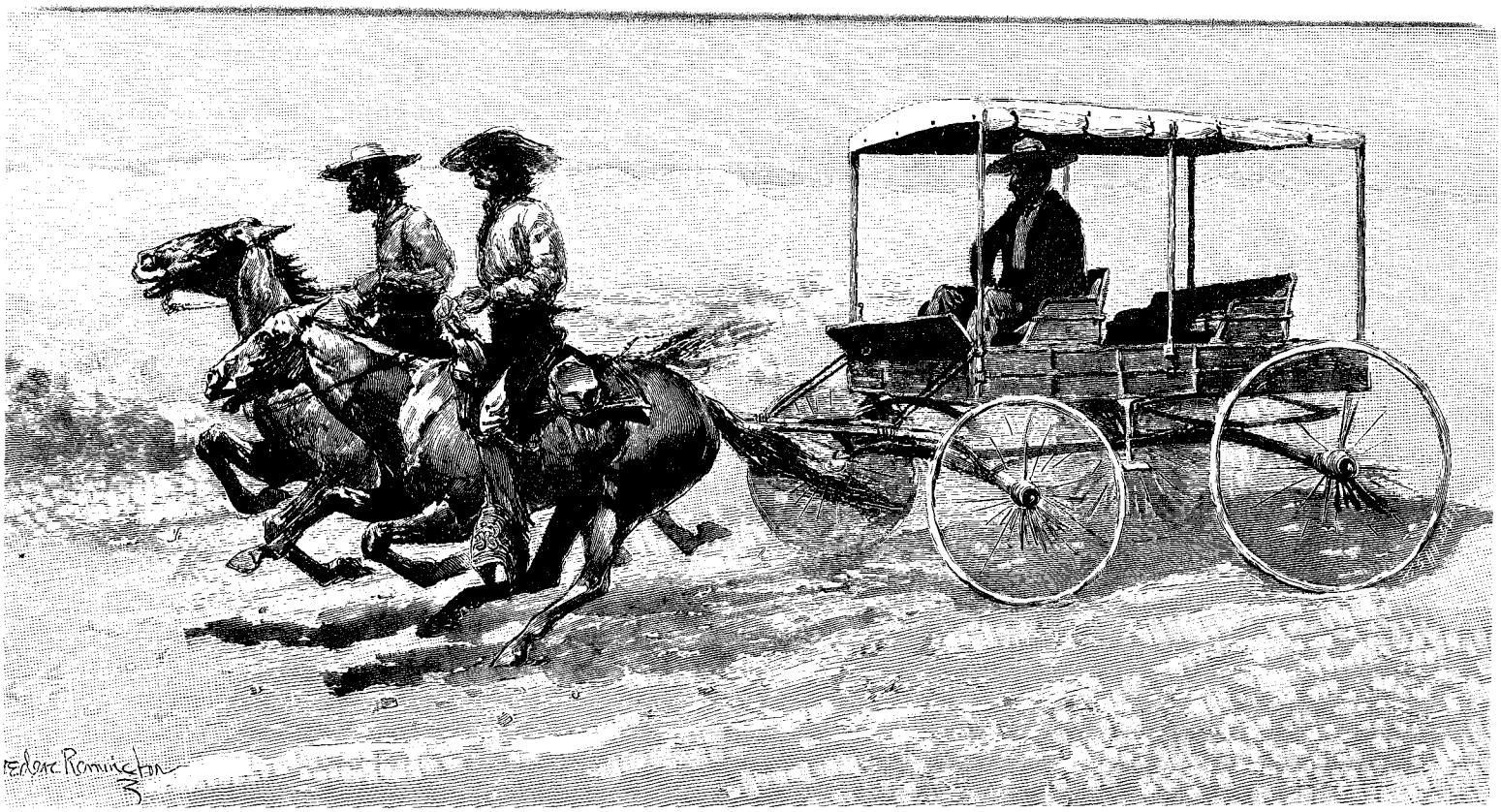


The governor's equipage, not much better than a spring wagon, was pulled by two mounted vaqueros.

more. When he reached Livermore's—ten or fifteen miles away—and told him what Amador had done, he found Livermore skinning a steer of Amador's!

Next day, seeing nothing to encourage me, I started to return to Marsh's ranch.

On the way, as I came to where two roads, or rather paths, converged, I fell in with one of the fourteen men. M. C. Nye, who had started for San Jose. He seemed considerably agitated, and reported that at the Mission of San Jose, some fifteen miles this side of the town of San Jose, all the men had been arrested and put in prison by General Vallejo, Mexican commander-in-chief of the military under Governor Alvarado, he alone having been sent back to tell Marsh and to have him come forthwith to explain why this armed force had invaded the country. We reached Marsh's after dark.

The next day the doctor started down to the Mission of San Jose, nearly thirty miles distant, with a list of the company, which I gave him. He was gone about three days. Meanwhile we sent word to the men on the San Joaquin River to let them know what had taken place, and they at once returned to the ranch to await results.

When Marsh came back he said ominously, "Now, men, I want you all to come into the house and I will tell you your fate." We all went in, and he announced, "You men that have five dollars can have passports and remain in the country and go where you please." The fact was he had simply obtained passports for the asking; they had cost him nothing. The men who had been arrested at the Mission had been liberated as soon as their passports were issued to them, and they had at once proceeded on their way to San Jose. But five dollars! I don't suppose any one had five dollars.

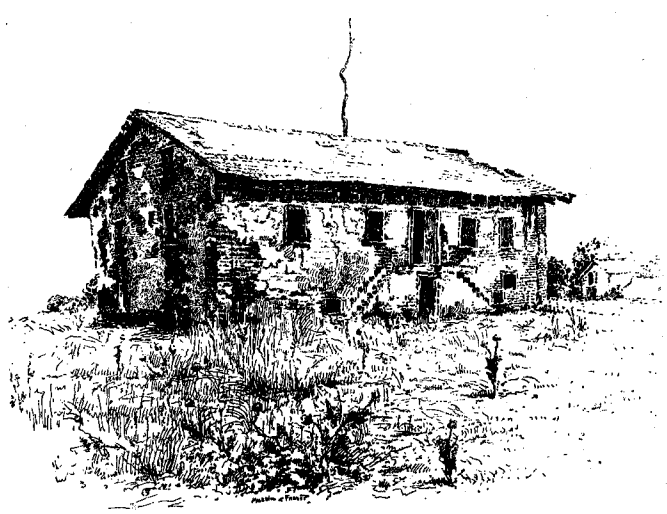
The names were called and each man settled, giving the amount in something, and if unable to make it up in money or effects he would give his note for the rest. All the names were called except my own. There was no passport for me. Marsh had certainly not forgotten me, for I had furnished him with the list of our names myself. Possibly his idea was—as others surmised and afterwards told me—that, lacking a passport, I would stay at his ranch and make a useful hand to work.

The next morning before day found me starting for the Mission of San Jose to get a passport for myself. Mike Nye, the man who had brought the news of the arrest, went with me. A friend had lent me a poor old horse, fit only to carry my blankets.

I arrived in a heavy rain-storm, and was marched into the calaboose and kept there three days with nothing to eat, and the fleas were so numerous as to cover and darken anything of a light color. There were four or five Indians in the prison. They were ironed, and they kept tolling a bell, as a punishment, I suppose, for they were said to have stolen horses; possibly they belonged to the Horse-thief tribes east of the San Joaquin Valley. Sentries were stationed at the door.

Through a grated window I made a motion to an Indian boy outside and he brought me a handful of beans and a handful of *manteca,* which is used by Mexicans instead of lard. It seemed as if they were going to starve me to death.

After having been there three days I saw through the door a man whom, from his light hair, I took to be an American, although he was clad in the wild picturesque garb of a native Californian, including serape and the huge spurs used by the vaquero. I had the sentry at the door hail him. He proved to be an American, a resident of the Pueblo of Jan Jose, Thomas Bowen, and he kindly went to Vallejo, who was right across the



Sutter's Fort shortly before turn of the century.

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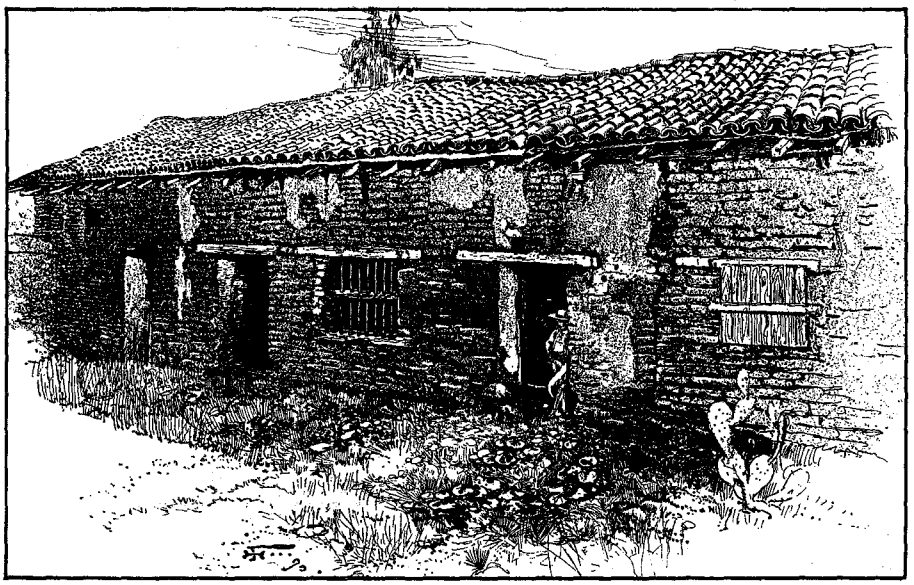
way in the big Mission building, and procured the passport for me.

I think I have that passport now, signed by Vallejo and written in Spanish by Victor Prudon, secretary of Vallejo. Every one at the Mission pronounced Marsh's action an outrage; such a thing was never known before.

We had already heard that a man by the name of Sutter was starting a colony a hundred miles away to the north in the Sacramento Valley. No other civilized settlements had been attempted anywhere east of the Coast Range; before Sutter came the Indians had reigned supreme.

As the best thing to be done I now determined to go to Sutter's, afterward called "Sutter's Fort," or New Helvetia. Dr. Marsh said we could make the trip in two days, but it took us eight. Winter had come in earnest, and winter in California then, as now, meant rain. I had three companions.



Ruins of the first California jail in Monterey.

It was wet when we started, and much of the time we traveled through a pouring rain. Streams were out of their banks; gulches were swimming; plains were inundated; indeed, most of the country was overflowed. There were no roads, merely paths, trodden only by Indians and wild game. We were compelled to follow the paths, even when they were under water, for the moment our animals stepped to one side down they went into the mire.

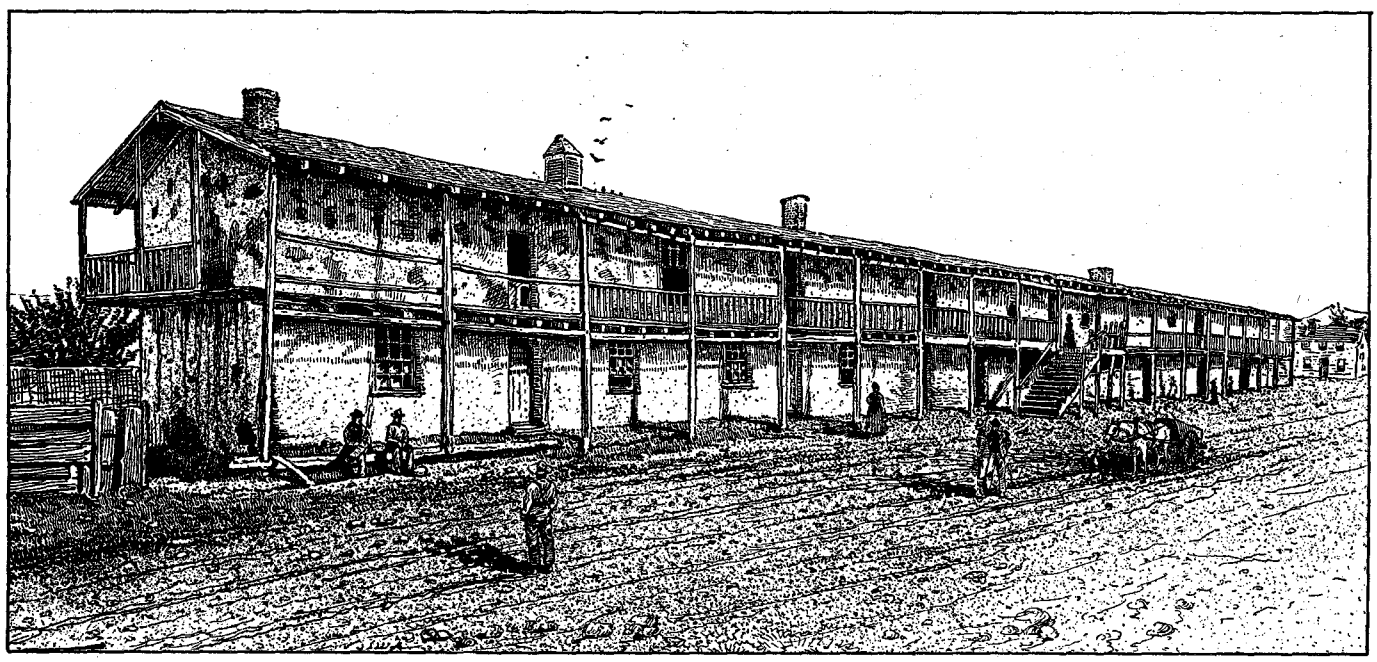
Most of the way was through the region now lying between Lathrop and Sacramento. We got out of provisions and were about three days without food. Game was plentiful, but hard to shoot in the rain. Besides, it was impossible to keep our old flint-lock guns dry, and especially to keep the powder dry in the pans.

On the eighth day we came to Sutter's settlement; the fort had not then been begun. Sutter received us with open arms and in a princely fashion, for he was a man of the most polite address and the most courteous manners, a man who could shine in any society.

Moreover, our coming was not unexpected to him. In the Sierra Nevada one of our men named Jimmy John became separated from the main party. It seems that he came on into California, and, diverging into the north, found his way down to Sutter's settlement perhaps a little before we reached Dr. Marsh's. Through this man Sutter heard that our company of thirty men were already somewhere in California. He immediately loaded two mules with provisions taken out of his private stores, and sent two men with them in search of us. But they did not find us, and returned, with the provisions, to Sutter's. Later, after a long search, the same two men, having been sent out again by Sutter, struck our trail and followed it to Marsh's.

John A. Sutter was born in Baden in 1803 of Swiss parents, and was proud of his connection with the only republic of consequence in Europe. He was a warm admirer of the United States and some of his friends had persuaded him to come across the Atlantic.

He went first to a friend in Indiana with whom he stayed awhile, helping to clear land, but it was business that he was not accustomed to. So he made his way to St. Louis and invested what means he had in *(Continued on page 62)*



The barracks at Monterey, the second most important harbor in California.

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Oregon's Homestead Murders

A killer who believed there had to be a corpse to prove a crime was in for a big surprise

by Estelle C. Laughlin

A jury returned a surprise verdict at the Wasco County Courthouse.

One of the first things I learned as a law office secretary was that there has to be a corpse to prove murder has been done. The evidence — the basic facts necessary to the commission of a crime, as, in murder, the actual death of the person alleged to have been murdered — is known as the *corpus delicti.*

Each month I opened a large box that arrived with new law books and new decisions that had been handed down by the courts. These were carefully inventoried and then placed on the shelves with other red-backed law books.

There was a section of old "buckskin" law books in one corner that the attorneys referred to as Old Timers. They were still useful, however, and were consulted on many occasions.

Sometimes, when I arrived at the office and found piles of law books all over the floor I wondered why any man, after studying law for eight long years and receiving his degree, would need to read so many books to win (or lose) a case. The whole thing fascinated me greatly.

One case that was discussed by the lawyers on more than one occasion was a murder that had taken place on March 9th, 1900. The victims were two women who had come west from Iowa.

It all began on a stormy night when a howling wind was sweeping the Cascade Mountains around Hood River, Oregon. Despite this inclement weather a man named Norman Williams went to the Fashion Livery Stable in Hood River to get his spring-wagon and team of horses. He told the proprietor, H.D. Langille, that it was imperative he get back to his homestead twenty miles from town that night.

After Williams had driven away the livery stable man noticed a lantern that someone had left behind. Reasoning that it had to be the man who had just left, Langille ran outside and called to him, but Williams was out of sight. Langille knew the man would need a light to see his way on such a night, so he saddled a horse and started out with the lantern to overtake Williams. He found the man and his spring-wagon in front of Thompson's boarding house.

By then Williams was not alone. There was a very pretty young lady seated beside the man and an older woman in the back. The latter had a grey valise and some bundles which she was adjusting in the wagon.

Williams thanked Langille for bringing the lantern, which he managed to hang over the buggy whip that stood upright in its socket, thus giving some light alongside the road.

The older woman in the back said, "This will help. It's a terrible night, but the Lord willing, we'll make it."

Williams picked up the reins, spoke to the team and drove away in the darkness.

The two women were never seen again.

More than two years later, Norman Williams was hung for their murder.

The story has been practically forgotten during the 66 years since it happened, except in law courts. The case of the State of Oregon vs Norman Williams is familiar to lawyers and jurists all over the United States. It has been cited again and again by prosecutors whose cases lacked that prime necessity known as the *corpus delicti.* A few old-time pioneers in the back country around Hood River recall the case as "The Great Homestead Murders."

The one thing that Williams overlooked was that blood is thicker than water. There was a man back in Iowa who became suspicious when he failed to hear from his mother and sister. His name was Nesbitt.

Alma Nesbitt, the sister, had gone to Oregon in 1899 to take up a homestead adjoining one occupied by Norman Williams, a man whom she had met back in Iowa. Williams had urged her to take up some of the free land in Oregon, insisting it was unusually rich and therefore cap-

(Continued on page 47)

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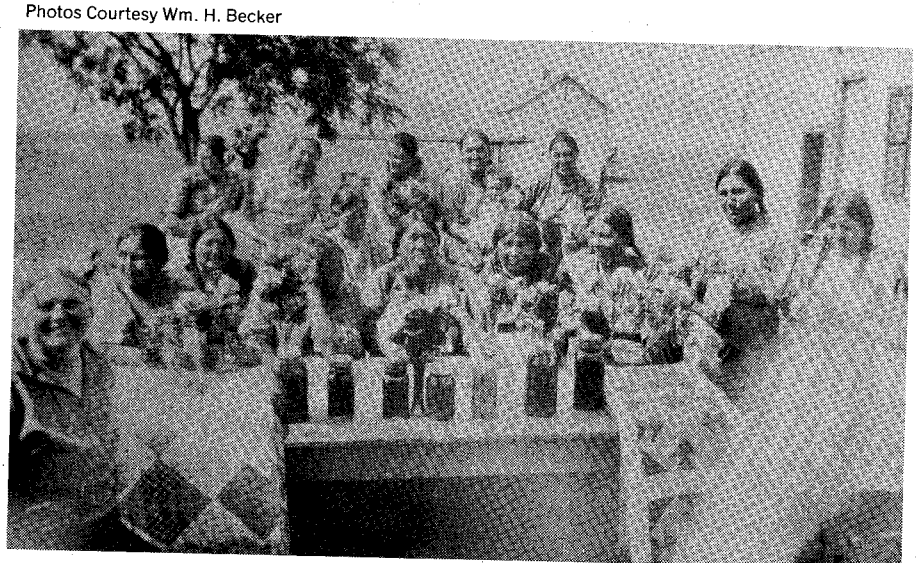
FIELD MATRON TO THE COMANCHES

The Reverend A.J. Becker and his wife, Magdalena.

Photos Courtesy Wm. H. Becker



The sewing, cooking and flower club organized by Mrs. Becker.

Quanah Parker drew a knife and cut several notches in an oak tree. "Build Jesus house here," he said.

by Leola Lehman

Early one morning in 1903 Magdalena Hergert Becker stepped up into her waiting buggy, slapped the leather reins down on the backs of the horses and set out upon 28 years of service to the Comanche Indians. She was only 25 years old and could not speak a word of Comanche. The Indians with whom she was to work could not speak English.

Magdalena Becker was the wife of the Rev. A.J. Becker, assistant missionary at the Mennonite Brethern Post Oak Mission located five miles northeast of Indiahoma, Oklahoma. She had been among those trying to win the confidence of the Indians for the past two years and had no illusions at all about the attitude of the Comanches toward all white persons in the Southwest. It was unfriendly, disbelieving.

When the government decided to appoint two of the missionary ladies in the area field matrons to help rehabilitate the Indians Mrs. Becker and her husband talked the situation over. There were many things to be considered before accepting such a position. With small children in the family Mrs. Becker was needed at home. The territory in which she would work was rough, timbered country that would mean unusually hard going in bad weather. Then there was the refusal of the Comanches to accept friendly overtures.

The mission couple also considered the good that could result. Mrs. Becker would have entree into the homes of the Indians. That, surely was the first step toward reaching a friendly understanding. The Beckers understood the resentment of the Indians.

Before the white settlers arrived in the prairie country the Comanches had ranged freely from the Republican River in Nebraska down to the Rio Grande. With herds of wild horses to provide transportation and buffalo to take care of most of their other wants, they had lived a free and happy life.

When the whites moved in the Comanches fought desperately to retain their way of life. In the early days of the West they were a powerful people numbering around 4000, but warfare, disease and hunger had reduced them to a remnant of perhaps 1400 when, on June 2, 1872, Quanah Parker led them to the Indian Reservation in southwest Oklahoma. They settled there in small, scattered

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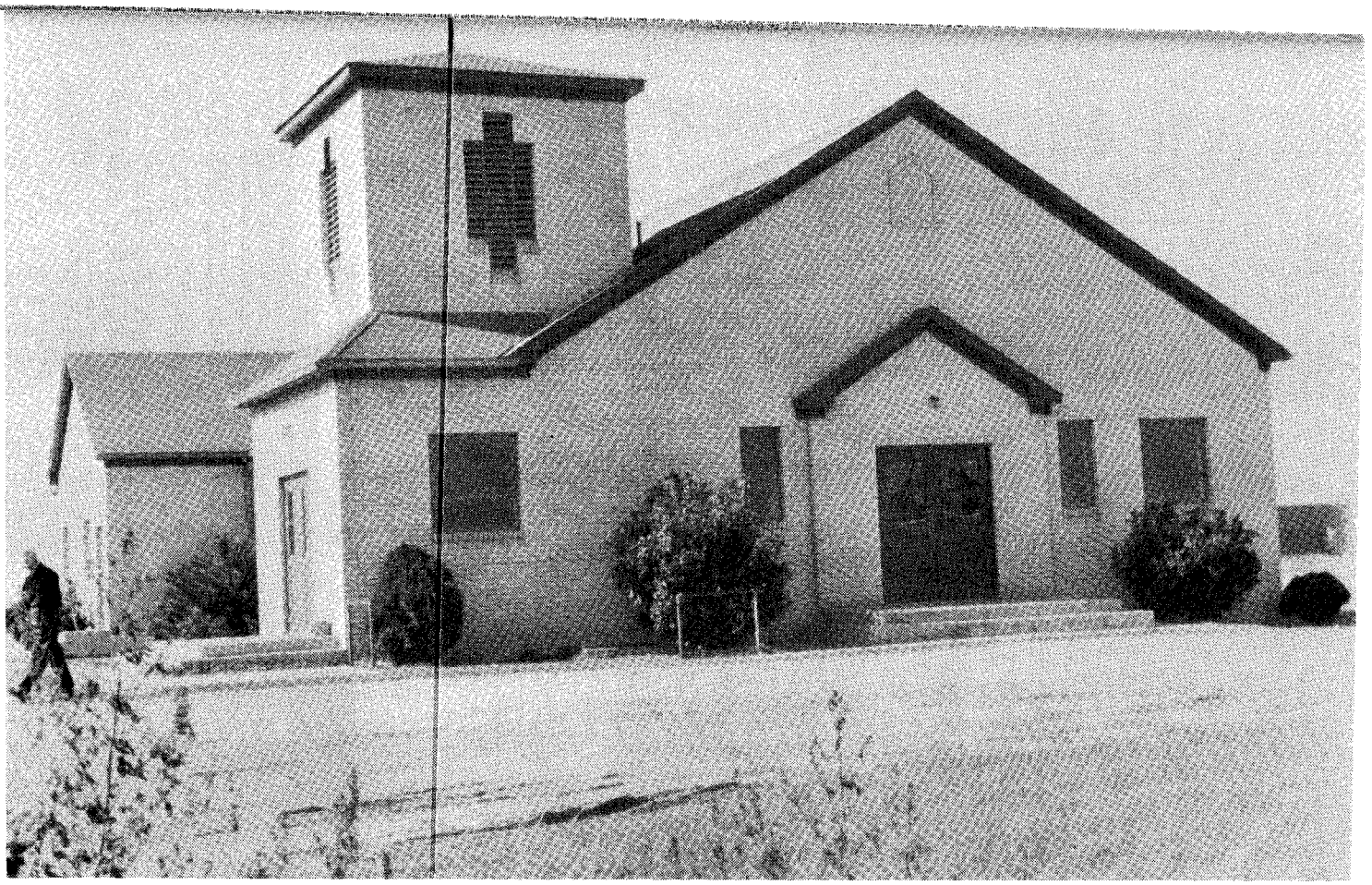

The Post Oak Mission was moved nearer Indiahoma, Oklahoma, in 1957 to allow expansion of Fort Sill.

villages along the creeks in the Wichita Mountains. Living in canvas tepees and other types of tent homes, they existed upon the beef and corn meal issued by the government. There was a little rent money from the Big Pasture, but not enough to help much.

Several missions were established to aid the Comanches. However, none of them were near where Quanah Parker lived. His bitter dislike for the whites appeared to be implacable.

When the Reverend Kohfeld, who established Post Oak Mission, came into the area in 1894 he felt that the Quanah Parker neighborhood was the one that needed a mission and school most. He made repeated attempts to convince Quanah of that fact, but had no success. The money the church had given the minister was almost gone when he borrowed a wagon, team and interpreter from the Lawton Indian Agent and went out to where Parker lived for one last attempt to win him over.

Quanah was not at home. Determined to see the Comanche chief, the Reverend Kohfeld sat down and waited. Through the interpreter he talked with Topay, Quanah's wife, and Tessiky who was the wife of one of the Comanche leaders and close friend of Quanah. The Reverend Kohfeld convinced the women that they should have a mission, and when Quanah and his men returned the wives urged him to grant land for the church.

Quanah talked with his leaders and then agreed.

"Get up behind one of my men," he told Kohfeld. "I will show you where to build."

The minister did as he was told. Quanah sent his horse leaping forward. The party was off on the wildest, most spine jarring ride the Reverend Kohfeld ever undertook. Through the trees and brush they tore at breakneck speed, through creeks, uphill and down. The minister hung on for dear life. Then Quanah jerked his pony to a stop and swung to the ground. He drew his knife and cut several notches in an oak tree.

"Build Jesus house here," he said.

And that was how Post Oak Mission got its name.

Giving the land for a mission did not mean easing the ill feeling the Comanches had for all white people, however. The Indians refused to have anything to do with missionaries after they came in and built their mission. It was this attitude that Magdalena Becker hoped to change when she went to them as field matron under the direction *(Continued on page 50)*

Author's Photos

Joe and Anna Gomez on their 20th anniversary.

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SHORT CAMPAIGN

He wanted to put an end to the fighting and join his wife, but that was not to be

by William Betts

Old tintype shows Lt. William Slaughter with his wife, Mary.

The rain fell in unrelenting sheets, whipped by the winds blowing gale force from Puget Sound. A huge herring gull, as though exulting in the storm, glided gracefully in widening circles before the winds. Lt. Bill Slaughter watched from his quarters and cursed his rotten luck.

October it was, 1855, at a small army post called Fort Steilacoom located in Washington Territory. In a way Lt. Slaughter had a right to be angry; angry at the fall storm; angry at his superior officers.

Just that morning he had sent his lovely and beloved wife Mary to Olympia to live with friends. A week ago headquarters had cancelled his transfer back to the States. All because a few dissatisfied Indians didn't like the treaty made with them the Christmas before. Why, the majority of the Puget Sound Indians wouldn't go to war with the whites. Some of those hotheads just loved to beat their drums, make a lot of noise; it was their way of letting off steam.

Bill Slaughter was an intelligent, vital, devoted career officer, a West Pointer. He had seven years service behind him in various Army posts throughout the States. He was an excellent officer who commanded the respect of those above him as well as of the men in his company.

Lt. Slaughter had been stationed at Fort Steilacoom in the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Infantry Regiment for the past two years. In that time he had learned much about the Puget Sound country as well as the customs and the ways of the local Indian tribes. Now it looked as though he would be in the area a little longer.

"Damnit, if we have to round up some of these Nisquallys I wish we'd go and get the job over with," the young officer fumed.

But even when the rains let up Lt. Slaughter wasn't called upon to lead a punitive expedition against the Indians. In fact several days passed and still there was no hint of action against the renegades being planned by the brass.

Then on October 14th, Lt. Slaughter read the proclamation issued by Acting Governor Charles H. Mason. (Gov. Issac Stevens was in the East negotiating a treaty with the Blackfoot Indians.)

Word had been received by Mason that the Yakima Indians were on the warpath against the whites. The Yakimas at this time held territory on the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains. Acting Governor Mason declared that a state of war now existed between this eastern Washington tribe and the United States. He called for two companies of volunteers; each to consist of eighty-six men and officers to augment the regular troops. The companies were formed, one at Fort Vancouver and the other at Olympia.

Then Gov. Mason and Col. Simmons, the Indian agent, inaugurated a war policy. Its object: To segregate the friendly Indians from those who had "taken to the woods" (gone to war). All of the Indians located upon the east side of the Puget Sound and who refused to enter the reservations, disregarding the protection of the government, or all those Indians who had chosen to remain on ground declared to be hostile and under the interdict of military operations, were declared to be in a state of war with the government of the United States.

Corps of sub-agents, with the help of the regular army troops as well as the volunteers, collected the friendly Indians at convenient locations on the west side of Puget Sound out of the area considered hostile country.

Lt. Slaughter led a company of men from Ft. Steilacoom in this work. He was much happier now that his enforced inactivity was ended.

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OF LT. SLAUGHTER

Washington State Historical Society Photos

An early print of old Fort Nisqually with the steamer "Beaver" in the foreground.

In the meantime, Col. Raines, commanding the 4th Infantry Regiment at Fort Vancouver, instructed Capt. Maloney, then at Fort Steilacoom, to take fifty regulars and proceed to the Yakima country to help hold that tribe in check. Capt. Maloney, along with Capt. Hays and fifty volunteers, left for Naches Pass in the Cascades.

This left but a handful of regular troops under the command of Lt. Slaughter along with the volunteer companies to protect the western slopes of the Cascades and the Puget Sound country.

On Sunday, the 28th of October, Nelson's band of Green River Indians, knowing that Capt. Maloney had left for the East, struck the White River settlements, killing eight men, women and children and burning and destroying their homes.

On the same date, Lt. McAllister and Lt. Connell, both in the volunteers, on an expedition to track down Chief Leschi of the Nisqually tribe and either induce him to make peace or bring him back to Fort Steilacoom in irons, were killed in ambush near the White River.

The very next day, William Tidd, carrying a dispatch to Capt. Maloney somewhere in the Cascades, passed over the road near which the bodies of the two slain officers lay. Unaware of the killings, Tidd crossed through Connell's prairie without being harmed.

Tidd delivered the dispatches from Fort Steilacoom headquarters on the 29th of October. Capt. Maloney sent his aides-de-camp, A. Benton Moses, Joseph Miles, George Bright, a Mr. Bradshaw, Dr. M.P. Burns and A.B. Rabbeson, all of them belonging to the regulars, back to Fort Steilacoom with Tidd.

On the 3rd of November the seven men came to Connell's Prairie about mid-afternoon. They found a band of Nisquallys encamped there who professed friendship with the whites. The soldiers proceeded toward Fort Steilacoom without being molested.

The troopers followed a narrow road through swampy terrain until they were almost at the identical spot where Lt. McAllister and Connell were killed. Suddenly the brush along the road exploded with musket fire. Moses and Miles were killed in the ambush, the others were able to escape.

In the meantime, Capt. Maloney was making a decision to give up his expedition to the Yakima country. Already there was several inches of snow in the pass and Capt. Maloney realized that once on the other side the winter snows would

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block his return. Certainly his small force was needed more urgently in the Puget Sound country than east of the mountains. He turned back.

At Fort Steilacoom Lt. Slaughter was told about the two new ambushes at Connell's Prairie. He prepared to leave the fort with Company C of the 4th Infantry for the Puyallup River and try to head off the Nisqually as he supposed they would try to join Nelson's band on the Green River.

Before Lt. Slaughter took to the field he had been overseeing the loading of supplies aboard the little steamship *Traveller,* skippered by John G. Parker. The supplies were destined for a fort to be built on the upper White River. The *Traveller* left for the White simultaneously with Lt. Slaughter's departure for the Puyallup River.

Capt. Hewitt, commanding Company H, Washington Territory Volunteers, left Olympia with pack horses and mules and was to rendezvous with Lt. Slaughter's command near the junction of the Green and White Rivers.

Also Capt. Wallace with Company A, Washington Territorial Volunteers, was ordered to keep contact with Lt. Slaughter.

The strategy of the military movement against the Indians was simple enough. Lt. Slaughter was to keep contact with the hostiles, cutting them off from the settlements and engage them in battle, gradually wearing them out until they gave up.

Lt. Slaughter and his company proceeded with as much speed as was possible under the trying conditions encountered. The autumn rains had swollen the rivers until they were unfordable. The continued wetness made his men miserable.

When Lt. Slaughter arrived in the vicinity of Connell's Prairie where the two ambushes had occurred there was no sign of the Nisquallys. They had fled from the area.

While Lt. Slaughter was reconnoitering —it was then the 2nd of November— Capt. Maloney arrived from the Naches Pass with his command.

Lt. Slaughter told his superior officer what had transpired since Maloney had been gone on his short expedition to the Yakima country. If he doubted the wisdom of Capt. Maloney's decision to turn back, against orders, to the Puget Sound country Bill Slaughter kept such thoughts to himself. He knew only too well that the job of hunting down the hostiles on the west side of the Cascades was far more difficult than had been thought at the beginning.

The home and farm buildings belonging to Lt. Connell were found to be burned by the Nisquallys. Lt. Slaughter silently cursed under his breath when he saw the wanton destruction around the farm. Lt. Connell had been a good friend; now he was dead and even his remains were missing, hidden by the Nisquallys.

Bill Slaughter ordered a search for the bodies of the missing men, and after an extensive search found them concealed in the bushes near where the Indians had fired upon them. The body of Lt. Connell was buried on his claim and the others were sent back to Olympia for burial.

Capt. Maloney ordered Lt. Slaughter to proceed toward the Green River and try to make contact with the hostiles. Early on the morning of the 4th Lt. Slaughter and his command left for the chosen point of contact.

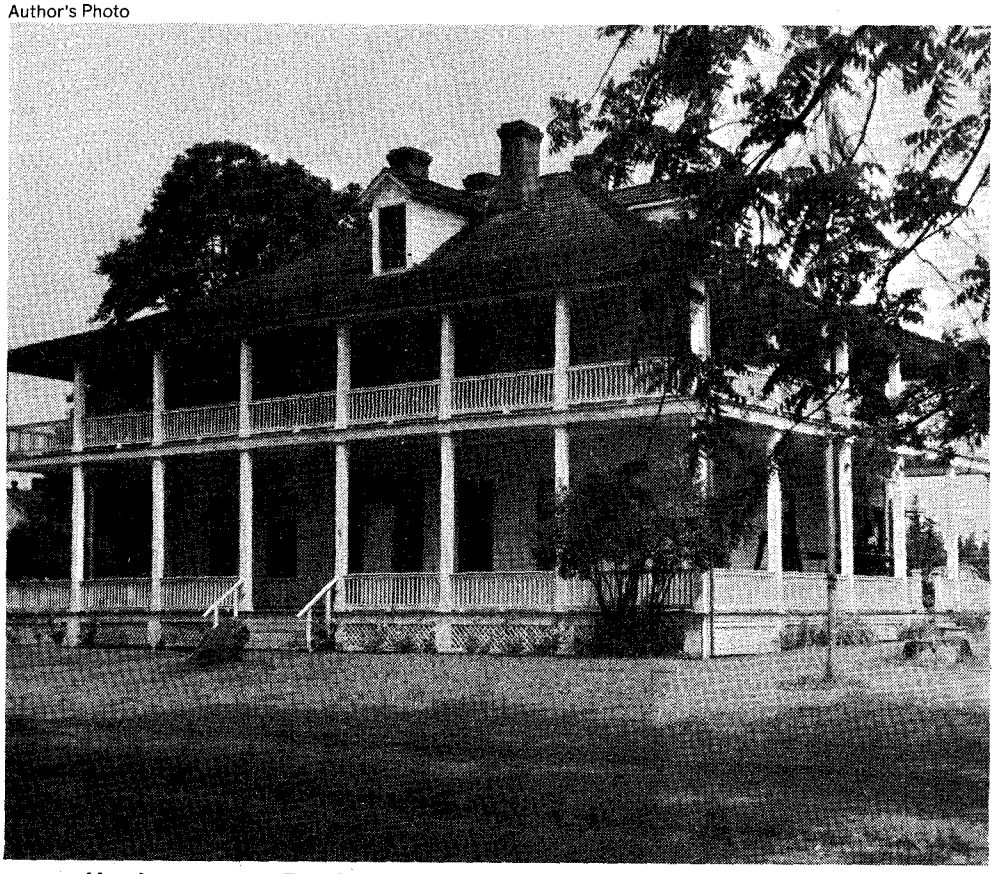
Advance scouts sent word back to Slaughter, who now had fifty regulars as well as fifty volunteers under Capt. Hays, that a large body of Indians was at a river crossing some two miles south of the White River junction with the Green.

"We saw them hiding in a bunch of driftwood logs, Lieutenant. Across the river. I think it must be an ambush for us," the scout reported to Slaughter.

Washington State Historical Society Photos

Camp Montgomery as it looked a decade after the Indian Wars.

Author's Photo



Headquarters at Fort Vancouver from which orders were issued.

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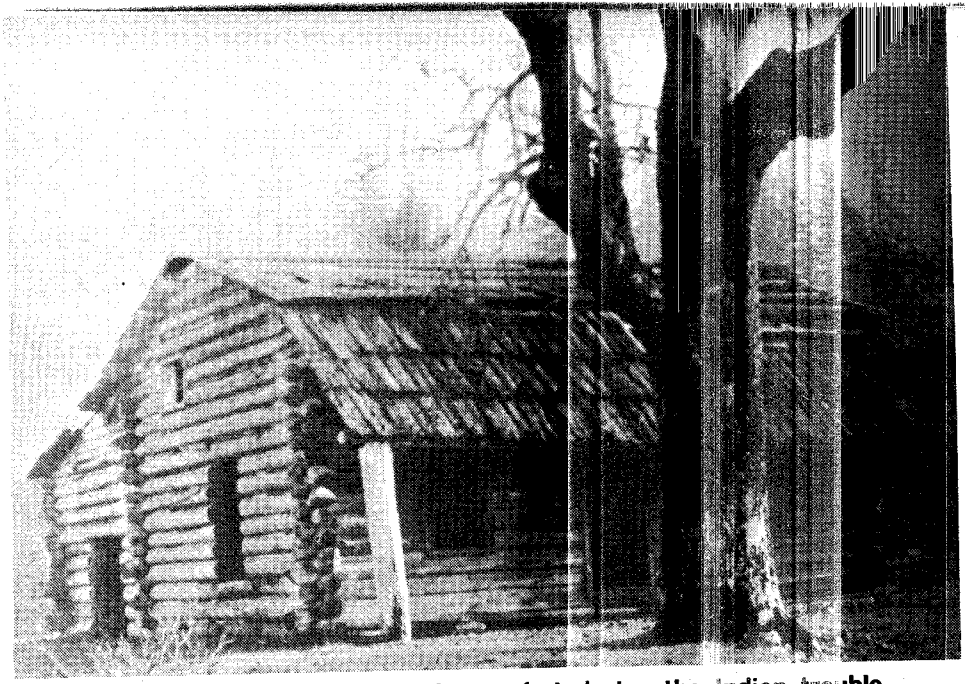
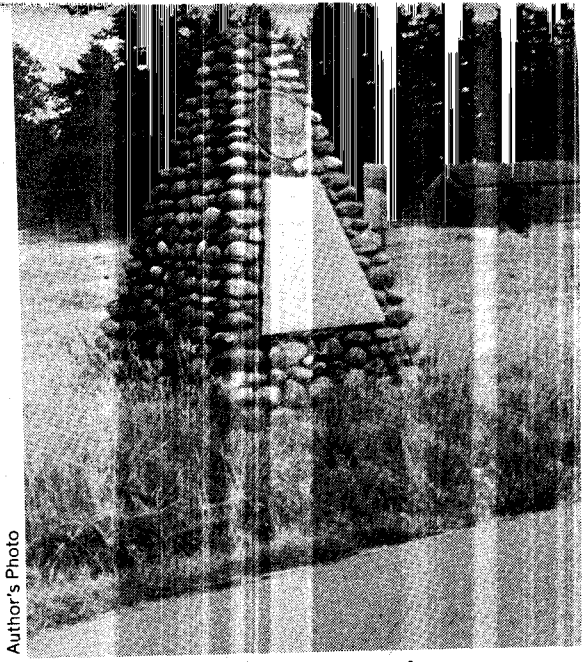


One of the buildings used as a fort during the Indian trouble.



Author's Photo

Marker at Camp Montgomery site.

It was eight o'clcok in the morning when the advance squad arrived at the river crossing. Immediately the Indians opened fire on them from their place of concealment in the logs. But for once the usually wily natives had chosen their place of ambush unwisely. The bank rose sharply on the west side of the river and was heavily wooded. This enabled Lt. Slaughter and his men to creep to the edge of the river hidden from the Indians by the trees and brush.

When they were in a position opposite the log jam Lt. Slaughter gave the command to fire. The men opened up with a withering fire from their places of concealment, pinning the Indians down. Now and then when some Indian moved into view, he was promptly picked off.

Lt. Slaughter realized that he would have to cut off escape for the Indians before they left their position in the logs. Somehow he would have to get his men across the river. But how? The river was rain swollen, unfordable.

A large poplar tree grew near the river's edge, and caught the lieutenant's eye. He gazed at it thoughtfully and found his answer.

"Sgt. Tootwiler," Bill Slaughter called to his first sergeant, "get a detail of men to fell that tree across the river." He pointed to the tall poplar growing beside the river. "We'll keep the Nisquallys in hand while we chop it down to make a bridge," he explained.

Soon a soldier was busily engaged with an axe, chopping the tree. He worked fast as he was exposed to the fire of the Indians across the river. The soldiers kept up a continuous fire into the log "fortress" preventing the Indians from shooting effectively at the axman.

A large notch was cut into the tree and Lt. Slaughter's hopes for a bridge rose as the chips flew from the tree trunk. The Indians were shooting from time to time, but without effective aim. Then they got lucky and put a fatal ball into the back of the tree-chopper, and Lt. Slaughter abandoned the tree-bridge idea. The musket fire continued for some time and then subsided. All day long the shooting would break out sporadically, but by four o'clock that afternoon the forest grew silent.

The Indians had sneaked away in the gloom of twilight.

Still, for the one killed and the two wounded that his forces had suffered, the Nisquallys had lost at least thirty braves, Lt. Slaughter realized. The wiry little infantry officer was more determined than ever to find and annihilate them.

The Nisquallys headed north, down the White River toward the junction of the Green. Lt. Slaughter decided to follow them and press the advantage of the day. The Indians, however, eluded their pursuers and were soon swallowed up in the dense forest that lined the river banks.

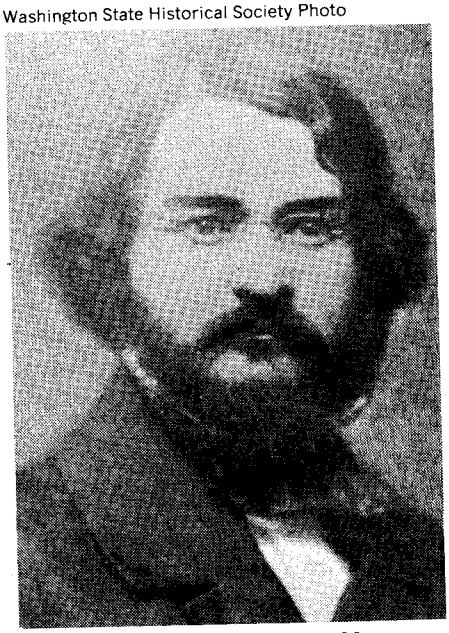
Lt. Slaughter's command had been in the field for days. The men were constantly wet, the supplies were running low. It was time to return to Fort Steilacoom.

On Saturday, November 24th, encamped at Camp Montgomery, a supply base near the Puyallup River, Lt. Slaughter's C Company and Capt. Wallace's Company D of the Pierce County Volunteers were once again ready to take to the field against the hostiles. Lt. Slaughter had visited his wife in Olympia and also, he had been commended by Capt. Maloney for his defeat of the Nisquallys on the White.

The lieutenant's little detachment left Camp Montgomery on the morning of the

(Continued on page 45)

Washington State Historical Society Photo



Acting Governor Charles Mason.

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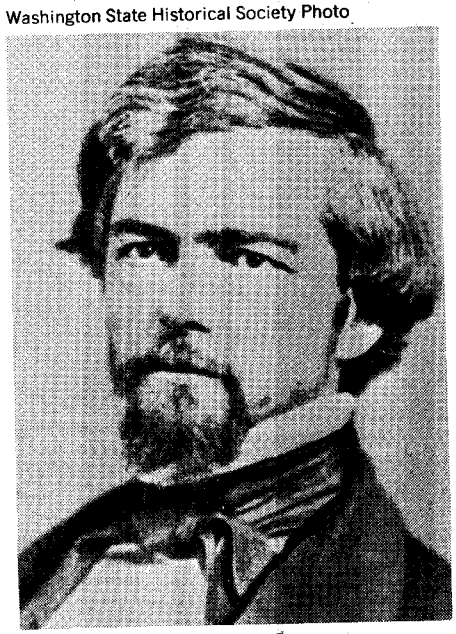

Governor Isaac Stevens.

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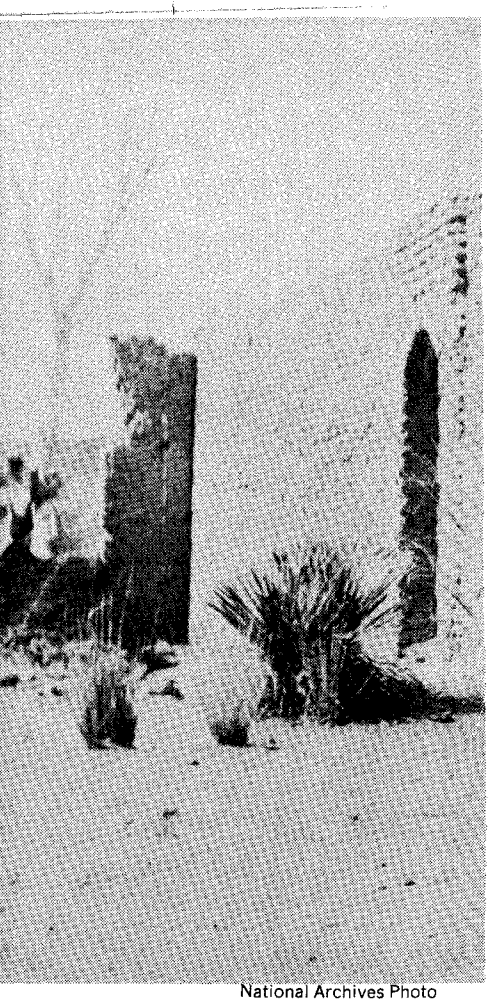
Devil's Den of Thieves

Finding old Charleston, Arizona, is difficult, but once there you'll agree this outlaws' oasis puts better known ghost towns to shame



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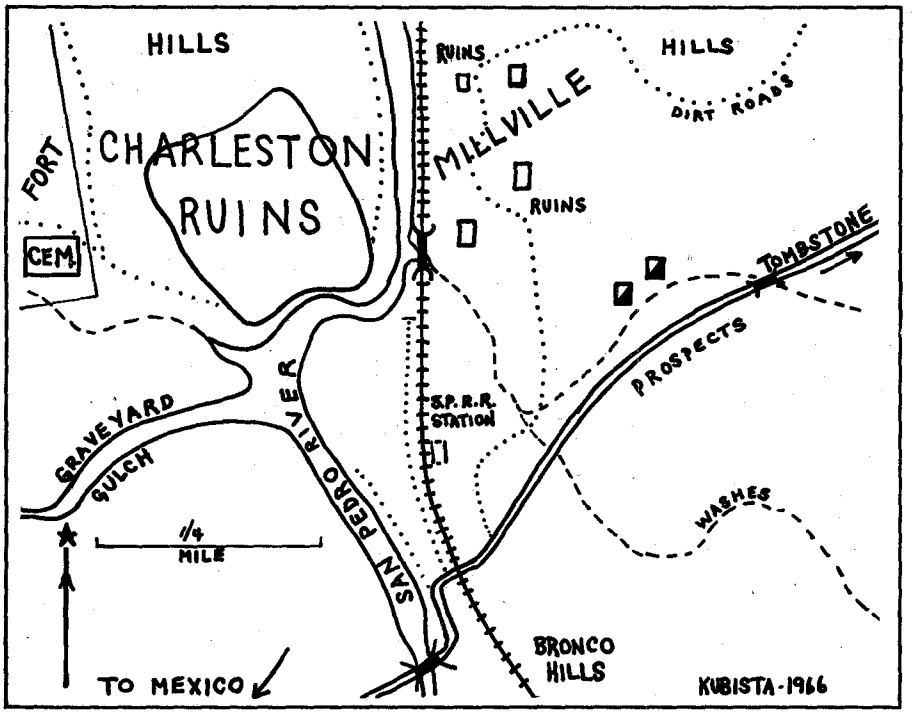

Author's map shows the way to old Charleston.

by Arizona Bob Kubista

The odds are that most of the disreputable citizens of Charleston in Cochise County, Arizona, didn't know the place was named for the immoral English monarch, King Charles II. People living in the town on the bluffs high above the San Pedro River were quick to tell anyone interested that the place was no mere collection of tarpaper shacks. It was a substantial group of adobe stores and bars. Mostly bars, 10 to 1. This was certainly appropriate because the court of King Charles II was well known to be the most disreputable in English history, and included among its achievements two disastrous wars with the Dutch, the Great Plague, the Great Fire of London and the Rye House Plot!

Charleston, Arizona, worked hard to match this record. For 10 years it tried and then circumstances called a halt to its progress. Charleston died and almost disappeared.

Ten miles down a back road from Tombstone, "the town too tough to die," are the hidden remains of Charleston, a far tougher town.

Its demise was officially noted in 1889 in the Tombstone *Prospector* and little has been heard of it since. For a short decade Charleston prospered and grew like a weed in the middle of nowhere until the post office was closed in the fall of 1888. Then it went back to seed so quickly and completely that it all but disappeared. Travelers driving from Tombstone to the southwest, down a thin macadam road that doesn't even have a route number, pass within half a mile of the 20 or 30 buildings and never see them even if they are watching for the ruins. What they may see on the east bank of the San Pedro River are the bases of the large stamping mills huddled against the hills. But these are correctly part of Millville, not Charleston. Almost no one nowadays can find Charleston.

The numerous adobe buildings are hidden in a tall undergrowth of mesquite and manzanita that stand over 12 feet high. Even an aerial photograph reveals almost nothing because the whole tangle is covered by creeping vines that block the view. Charleston was founded in 1878 and the great number of adobe buildings erected in only 10 years is surprising. More surprising is that the walls of so many are still standing, hidden in a dry jungle on a bluff just northwest of the confluence of Deadman's Gulch and the shallow San Pedro River.

Many maps show the wrong location, and writers who have never been to the actual site have frequently given false directions. That is probably why Charleston has been misplaced so often, and what makes exploring the ruins now so exciting. This "outlaws' oasis" had so many unrecorded shootings and knifings that it put better known ghost towns

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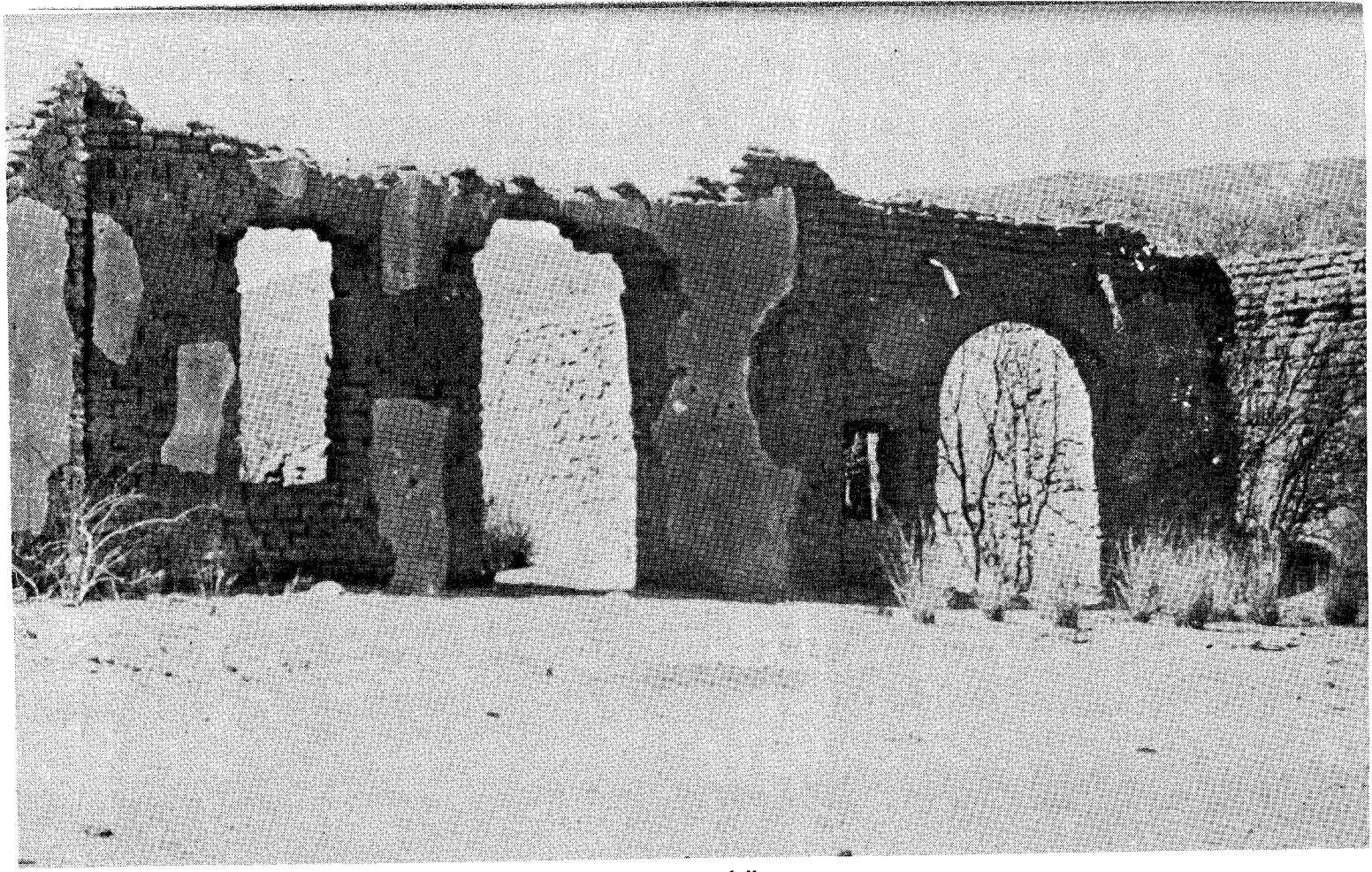
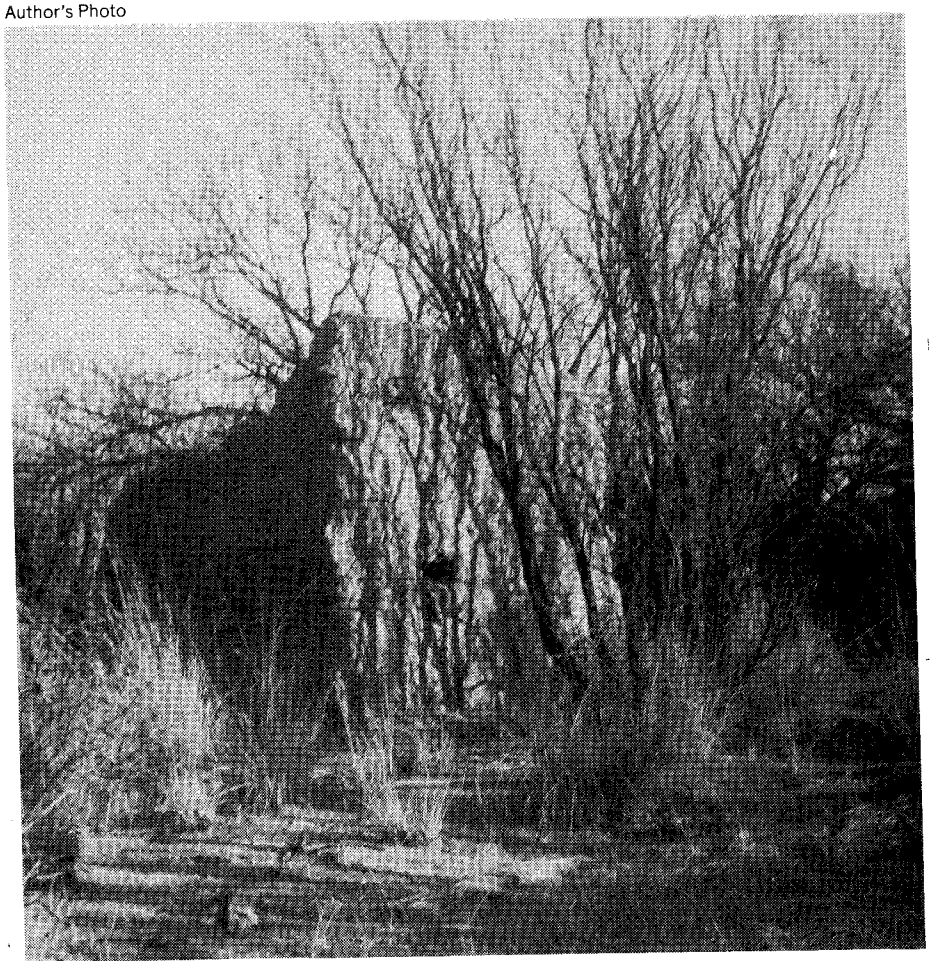


Spanish bayonet plants appeared when the adobe walls began to fall away.

to shame. Those slayings that were noted were covered on the front pages of newspapers in other less fortunate towns, and explains why Charleston was soon known as the "liveliest place in Cochise County." When it got too hot for desperadoes and bandits in other localities, they would high-tail it for Charleston. The Mexican border was conveniently right down the valley, without even a fence to mark the crossing. All the outlaws had to do was to keep riding and soon they were across "the line."

To find Charleston you must follow directions carefully. In Tombstone, go west on Allen Street almost to the end of the pavement. Where two white signs point out the way across the mesquite hills to the southwest, you turn left. The narrow road takes off on a run bouncing up and down many small hills, turning past two large mine workings far off on your left in the Loma de Plata or Hills of Silver. This is open country with a few cactus and many flaming ocotillo plumes waving in the desert wind. After about seven miles on the old stagecoach road you will drop off high ground and begin to enter a canyon at a place called "the Narrows." This is the location of the Battle of the Bulls, which the L.D.S. Mormon Battalion fought on December 12th, 1846, and is now marked by a concrete shaft. The barren and brown countryside suddenly turns to green as you go down into the valley of the San Pedro. The road

Author's Photo



Eighty years ago this drugstore was open for business.

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crosses a small bridge and makes a right turn before bounding over the tracks of the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Immediately after crossing the railroad tracks you turn due north, and drive 200 yards parallel to the rails on a cindered one-lane road. On the east side of the tracks you will see the foundation of the old Charleston railroad station, and in another 100 yards you will have to stop because four vertical ties have been sunk to keep you from plunging off a very high bank into the shallow river. Park your car as far away from the tracks as possible, or go back to the black-topped road and turn off to your right just yards short of the river bridge. If you cross and continue on you will be at the east gate of Fort Huachuca, 10 miles away. You are only 17 miles from the Mexican Border as it is.

You will have to pick your way through bramble bushes and low-growing mesquite until you reach the high banks of the San Pedro, right where Deadman's Gulch enters the river from the west.

The San Pedro is a wide gravelly channel here and the water is only a foot deep most of the year as it runs between steep dirt banks as high as 75 feet in places. When you stand under the towering cottonwood trees looking across the river bed you may not see a single wall, although there are two dozen adobe buildings, some standing only a few feet from the far bank. Climb down, wade across the firm bottom and clamber up the far side. Force your way into the heavy underbrush a couple of yards and let your eyes get used to the deep shade.

All around you will be adobe walls, buildings, and winding paths threading their way through the remains of old Charleston, dead for 78 years. The thick mesquite and the tall manzanita trees crowd out the sun but soon you will be able to see ruins everywhere. They cover a rectangular area, with a cemetery on the western edge that is just inside the Fort Huachuca artillery range. This dry jungle filled with ruins always reminds me of temples in Siam, overgrown with vines and crawling with snakes. Bending your head as you pass under the hanging vines you will find yourself on one of the numerous paths moving like tunnels through the matted underbrush. There is one main street and several alleys leading off in different directions. Old Charleston rests on a bluff, in back of which rises a large egg-shaped hill another 600 feet above you.

The southern limits of Charleston are on the high banks of the San Pedro, and the eastern edge stops on the curved river bank also. The north side of town peters out as you leave the dry jungle and head up the rocky hill. On the west, the ruins fade away as you reach the open range. There is a trace of a dirt road beyond the cemetery which may very well be the original road going to Fort Buchanan and later Fort Crittenden, both of which were closed before Charleston was born.

Here on the sunny banks of St. Peter's River is one of the few genuine ghost towns of the Southwest where there are no new signs pointing to "The Lost Silver Mines of Yesteryear." You will find no glossy markers reading "This way to Hidden Mine Shafts..." or "Rest Rooms ...500 Feet Ahead!" Instead, you will find the crumbling walls of at least two stores, a dozen or more smaller buildings along a generally straight line that suggests they may have been "cribs" or "palaces of pleasure": a number of sturdy adobe walls scattered at random that possibly were ordinary houses, and at the western edge of old Charleston there are low walls and the faint outlines of still more buildings.

A wooden schoolhouse is missing, as well as an insulated icehouse, but corral outlines are obvious and adobe sta-

(Continued on page 48)

Author's Photo

Arrow points to ghost town ruins high above the shallow San Pedro River.

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ROUND-UP TIME

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. How many Indians were there in the continental United States (excluding Alaska) when the white man came here? S.A.S., Billings, Montana.

A. There are, of course, no accurate figures. However, an educated estimate was made by Henry R. Schoolcraft in his 6-volume work on the subject and he came up with an estimate of 240,000, based upon his belief that it would require 40,000 acres to support a family of five persons living by the chase. Today this appears conservative, for there were tribes practicing agriculture at the time as they do today. The Columbia Encyclopedia estimates there were 900,000 Indians north of Mexico in 1492. There are today, 1960 census, 523,591 Indians in the U.S. 145,593 are urban dwellers; 377,998 live in rural areas, reservations, etc.

Q. What was the doctor's name who accompanied the cattlemen when they set out against the "rustlers" in the Johnson County War? L.D.A, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

A. Dr. Charles Penrose. He later wrote his experiences in a manuscript called The Rustler Business. *This was first published in 1959 by Keith and Betty Rider of the Douglas (Wyoming)* Budget.

Q. Where was Fort Rice, mentioned in Feb. 1966 *The West?* S.R., Snohomish, Wash.

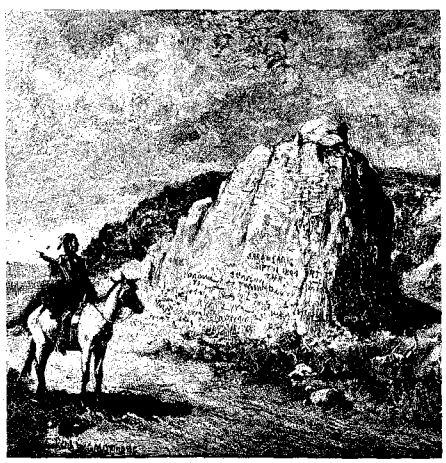
A. Fort Rice was established on the west bank of the Missouri River, North Dakota, in 1864. The location is about half way between Fort Yates and Fort A. Lincoln. It was abandoned in 1878.

Q. Who was Joe LeFors, and what was he known for in the West? A.D.S. & M.R., Camphill, Alabama

A. LeFors was a Wyoming peace officer and had some dealings with the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang and was familiar with the activities of Tom Horn and Billy Nash whom he once trailed. LeFors wrote an interesting account of his life, and it was published posthumously by his widow, Mrs. Nettie LeFors, under the title Wyoming Peace Officer. It is on the rare book lists now.

Q. Could you give me the location of the "Register Rock, Idaho," shown in the picture on page 71, January 1965, *Golden West* magazine? P.S.B., Casselton, N.D.

A. The picture, an engraving from an original by Frederic Remington, is apparently one drawn by Remington to illustrate one of the rocks found at Idaho's "Silent City of Rocks." This 25-sq. mile area lies between Almo and Oakley, about 30 miles south of Burley, in southern Idaho. The old Immigrant Trail, or "The Salt Lake Cut-off," made a junction with the California Cut-off Trail of '49, at nearby Almo. In this wide area are many formations such as Camp Rock, Signature Rock, Bath Tub Rock, Two Turtles Rock and others, many of which, like Camp Rock, bear the thousands of dates, names and messages left there by the pioneers. The area is state owned, lovely to visit, and an effort is being made to save the inscriptions from vandals by making it into a National Park area.



Register Rock, Idaho.

Q. How do they know that Jedediah Smith was killed by Comanche Indians?

A. Smith's brother, Austin, who was on the same wagon train trip to Santa Fe at the time of Jed's death, purchased Jed's rifle and pistol from Mexican Comancheros (traders). They told Austin what the Comanches who killed Smith said about his death. Telling their father the sad news, Austin wrote: "Your son Jedediah was killed on the Semerone, the 27th of May on his way to Santa Fe by the Comanche Indians. His party was in distress for water and he had gone in search for the above river when attacked by fifteen or twenty of them..."

Q. How does one gain membership to the famous "Westerners" organizations in Kansas City, Denver, Chicago, etc? B.D., Evanston, Wyoming.

A. These Posses *or* Corrals *as they are called usually invite membership. However, I believe they are all open to what they call "Corresponding Memberships," for men interested in any Western subject, and they are happy to have you in as a CM. Write to your nearby Denver Westerners, Philip W. Whiteley, Membership Chairman, 950 Western Federal Savings Bldg., Denver, Colo. 80202.*

Q. Has there ever been a book about the Texas trail drivers, written by actual cowboys? M.B., San Antonio, Texas.

A. Heavens, yes! The Trail Drivers of Texas *is its name. It is on the rare book lists, but libraries with a top Western selection can probably provide it for you. It has hundreds of true stories by old Texas trail drivers. Rare book dealers get $25 or more a copy.*

Q. How did a "jerkline" work on freight teams? A.M., Pueblo, Colo.

A. Usually six to eight teams were harnessed for a jerkline outfit. The driver rode the left wheel animal. The jerkline extended from his hand to the bridle-bit on the left lead animal. A series of sharp jerks caused the animal to turn to the right; a long, slow pull turned the lead team to the left. The right lead animal was connected to the left lead with a jockey stick, giving the trained, left lead animal the authority. Various hitches and devices were used by different drivers to achieve best results, but the above was in general use on freight outfits on the Plains.

Q. Is there a school for cowboys somewhere in the West? What do they teach? V.S., Ashland, Kansas.

A. Yes. It is the Mountain States Ranch School, west of Laramie, Wyoming, (Rex Route) on the Little Laramie River. It is on the 91 Ranch. They have 47 young men students at this time, Indian boys and others. The need for qualified ranch hands prompted the establishment of the school. They train young men to raise cattle, horses and crops for profit. Modern, efficient ranch and range management and the care and breeding of livestock is in the curriculum. The school has federal aid, under the U.S. Govt. Office of Economic Opportunity. George Krouse is Administrator; Karl Schakel, President. ●

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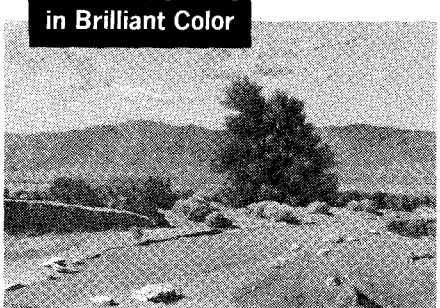

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MASSACRE AT RED BUTTE

(Continued from page 21)

a blast of withering fire as a troop of hastily assembled cavalrymen raced to their side.

Back in the hills, the wagon train's frantic dash for the fort was of short duration. With signal mirrors already ominously twinkling and a horde of screaming savages swooping down upon them, Sergeant Custard knew he had but one chance for survival.

He swung the lead wagon southward toward a small hollow in the lea of a little hill, in his mind as good a place as any from which to make a final stand.

There they quickly "forted up", forming the sides of a crude square with the three wagons they had left, leaving the west side open. (The men in the two rear wagons had abandoned them just in time to escape being swept up in a seething maelstrom of dust, powder smoke and rampaging Indians as scores of yelling, whooping warriors commenced circling the little corral at breakneck pace.)

When the whirling, fire-rimmed wheel of death had drawn close enough, a glory seeking young Cheyenne brave darted in and caught the bell-mare. With the rest following, he led all the mules away to set the whole wagon train afoot!

An assault was broken up, and two more equally as furious that followed. The men piled rolls of bedding, sacks of grain, bales, boxes—anything and everything that came to hand beneath the wagons for protection.

Four had elected to remain hidden in one of the wagons, doing fearful damage with their long rifles through slits cut in the canvas tops.

Realizing at last that it was almost certain death to come under the sights of the deadly guns in the hands of the soldiers, the Indians decided to resort to strategy to win the day. So while the chiefs held a powwow to figure something out, the fight settled down, at least for the moment, to a long distance siege.

Sergeant Custard made the most of the letup. Going from man to man, he had a word of advice here, a word of caution there. "Jest don't get any fool notions thet they won't be back," he warned grimly. "Them ain't jest any Injuns out there. Them's Cheyennes!"

At a sudden cry from one of the men, he turned to behold an imposing sight. Riding out from the others was a lone giant of an Indian, resplendent in a magnificent white war bonnet, the end of which all but touched the ground.

Custard, with an inward moan of despair, recognized him at once and his worst fears were realized. It was none other than the redoubtable Roman Nose, war chief of all the Cheyennes and the most dreaded Indian of his day on the vast expanse of the Great Plains!

In spite of the mounting hail of bullets the great chief rode around the embattled wagons seeking some flaw, some weak spot in their defense against which he could launch a final, decisive thrust.

But there were no flaws and he finally rode back to his silent, expectant warriors. Incredibly he bore not so much as a single, solitary scratch for all his astonishing indifference to the white man's marksmanship. The siege continued.

It was just past mid-afternoon when one of the soldiers had his attention drawn to a curious sight. From a wide branch ravine nearby, several small piles of brush were slowly approaching the corral's unprotected west side. As he continued to watch, a sudden spurt of flame atop one of them brought instant death to another trooper inside the corral, facing in the opposite direction.

The wiley Roman Nose's "medicine" had been good after all! "Our war arrows are not strong enough to pierce the sides of the blue-coat's wagons," he had told the other chiefs in council. "But our bullets are.

"So let the best shots among us advance toward the little soldier fort behind a deep dug trench, scooping the brush out with knives and tomahawks, and pushing it before them until they are within range.

"From such a place they cannot be seen, and it will be an easy thing for them to bring down our enemies, one by one."

And so it was. As the little clusters of impending doom drew relentlessly closer and closer, the answering fire from within the corral became slower and slower. Finally, there was none at all.

Roman Nose, ever watchful, signaled with his war shield, and all firing stopped. Then once again he rode forth to circle the entire train. Only this time not a single shot greeted his appearance.

Once, twice, three times around the silent little fortress he rode, splendid in his primitive grace, the ultimate of savage victory. Then, apparently satisfied with what he saw, with a single, high-pitched war cry, he led his wild horde unopposed into the corral.

The ensuing scene could well have come from the pages of Dante's Inferno itself. Though most of the soldiers by this time lay dead beside their still smoking rifles, Sergeant Custard and one or two others were, unfortunately for them, still alive.

A feeble struggle took place here, another there, as one by one, the luckless troopers were sought out and systematically dispatched amidst shrieks of fiendish glee and savage exultation. The only one still alive of the four who had taken refuge in the wagon was flung headlong to the ground, then literally

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dismembered alive by half a score of screaming red men, knives flashing, bloodied tomahawks flailing.

All except the valiant Sergeant Custard. For him there would be a special reward for his determined and courageous defense of the wagon train.

Though desperately wounded, he was dragged to one of the wagons. There, lashed and chained securely to a wheel, he was left to perish amongst the bodies of his slain companions in a raging inferno of flame and smoke as the train was put to the torch.

As dusk slowly descended, long lines of booty laden red men could be seen trailing off into the gathering haze. A heavy smoke pall rose from the scene of the conflict to drift away on a rising evening breeze.

As one of the fort's helpless eye-witnesses to the tragedy was later heard to remark, it was truly, "a fitting pyre for fallen heroes." ●

CAMPAIGN OF LT. SLAUGHTER

(Continued from page 39)

24th of November. His instructions: "To make contact with the hostiles, engage them and keep harassing them, give them no rest." When his small force reached the White River his scouts reported that there had been Indians along the banks in great numbers but they left the area. Lt. Slaughter had hoped to make contact with the Nisquallys, pursue them relentlessly; he wanted to put an end to the war and return to his Mary.

That night Lt. Slaughter ordered camp to be made at Bitting's Prairie, about a mile from the Puyallup River. The night was black and the rains had commenced again. Sgt. Tootwiler posted pickets about the camp with instructions to "shoot first and ask questions afterwards."

The following day scouts were sent out once more. One party reported that at the Struck River settlement three houses had been burned to the ground, others broken into, and household goods either stolen or burned.

Slaughter decided to advance to the Struck, continue down-river toward the White and try to make contact with the hostiles. The command reached the White without meeting a solitary Indian.

Lt. Slaughter ordered camp made near the White River. Fires were built, the men cooked their supper and cut fir boughs for their beds. Everything seemed peaceful, almost cheerful, as though this was not a war but a hunting party enjoying a camping and cook-out. The men laughed and joked among themselves.

The atmosphere was much too quiet for Lt. Slaughter. He sensed that the fast approaching night would be anything but peaceful. The Indians were like will-o-the-wisps, drifting from place to place, suddenly striking and as suddenly melting back into the forest.

Fog began to drift slowly up-river. It was cold. Lt. Slaughter shivered although his campfire sent out a warm glow. No, he didn't like the smell of it. He talked to his first sergeant.

"I have a feeling that the Nisquallys will try something tonight," he told him. "Either attack our camp or try to steal our horses and mules. Double the pickets around camp tonight. Tell them to be especially watchful around the picket line. With this fog anything can happen."

"Yes, sir!" Sgt. Tootwiler departed to post more pickets around camp.

At half past ten that night, as Lt. Slaughter was to later find out, Pvt. Hall of Company D, the sentinel near the picket line, heard one of the pack animals snorting. Hall ran to camp and awakened Sgt. Tootwiler.

Cursing under his breath, Tootwiler hurriedly pulled on his boots and awakened the off-duty guards. Together they made a rush to where the animals were picketed, some thirty yards from camp. They couldn't see very much. The fog lay as thick as smoke over a prairie fire. The picket line was totally obscured by the heavy fog although only a few feet away.

They could distinctly hear the Indians among the horses and mules yet they dared not shoot for fear of hitting valuable and irreplaceable mounts and pack mules. While they strained their ears the silence of the night was suddenly shattered with the explosive noise of galloping horses and yelling Indians.

Sgt. Tootwiler and his men pursued the raiders as far as the Lemmon claim. Here they found evidence that the horse thieves had met a much larger group of Indians.

The troopers beat a hasty retreat back to camp.

When Lt. Slaughter was informed of the raid his usual composure was shattered. He cursed and immediately alerted the camp. He knew that the Indians would press their advantage and attack. Soon they heard Indians all about the camp.

A squaw—Lt. Slaughter knew she was a squaw by the sound of her voice—kept urging the men to attack the camp. The Indians were braves of Ka-nas-hut and Kitsap, leaders of the Klikitats, and Quiemuth and Klow-ow-it, chiefs of the Green and White river Indians, called Muckelshoots by the whites. Although shots were fired all through the night the fog prevented either side from inflicting any casualties.

Before morning the Indians had ap-

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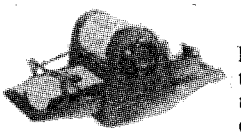

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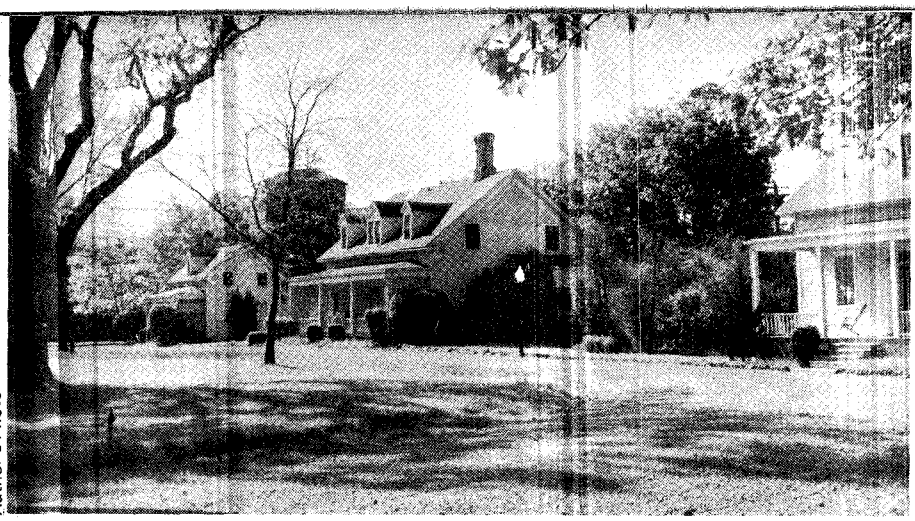

Author's Photo

Fort Steilacoom officers' row as it looks today.

parently decided that the whites were too much for them and had drifted into the fog enshrouded forest, which was now deathly still. Lt. Slaughter, eating his breakfast before his campfire, heard the gentle sound of the creek just below him. Then the silence of the morning woods was shattered by a single musket shot. Down by the creek bank the lieutenant saw Pvt. Price topple over near the stream. He ran to the side of the stricken man but one quick glance told him Price was beyond help; a musket ball had smashed into the base of his skull, nearly decapitating him.

The camp was thrown into an uproar with men running about confusedly, shouting, cursing, until Lt. Slaughter restored order. He sent Sgt. Tootwiler with a detachment of men to scout along the creek in the immediate area of the camp, but they found nothing.

"Price must have been ambushed by a loner," Lt. Slaughter told Capt. Wallace. "We've got to be more effective or they'll pick us off one by one!"

That afternoon Lt. Slaughter's command was re-enforced by Lt. McKeever, a newly arrived regular from San Francisco to Fort Steilacoom, with a detachment of 25 men from Company M, 3rd Artillery. They were a welcome sight to Lt. Slaughter.

It was a long time before Lt. Slaughter could go to sleep that night. The tent was damp. He wondered if the sentries, Lemon, Pierce and Foster of Company C would alert him if the Nisquallys should attack. He had finally dozed off for perhaps an hour when he was awakened by musket fire. The officer jumped from his blankets and hastily pulled on his boots.

"What now, Lemon?" Slaughter demanded.

"The damn Nisquallys again, sir. We heard 'em around the horses and drilled this one before he could get into the woods."

The next several days Lt. Slaughter spent chasing the Indians up and down the White. He was determined to pursue although the Indians had most of the advantages. Still, the Indians must be running low on food. Sooner of later they would have to expose themselves and then he would nail them.

On December 3rd, Lt. Slaughter and his small detachment were camped on Brannon's Prairie. Here he was joined by Capt. Hays with about 25 men. Hays brought a message from Fort Steilacoom that Lt. Slaughter was to proceed to the junction of the Green and White rivers where he was to rendezvous with a Capt. Hewitt and his small force of volunteers.

Lt. Slaughter sent a message to Hewitt, camped some three miles distant, to meet him at Brannon's Prairie. Late that afternoon Capt. Hewitt and his men arrived at the camp.

"Have you scouted the area around the Green River?" Lt. Slaughter asked the lawyer turned soldier.

"We've searched up and down the Green," Capt. Hewitt replied, "as well as the White, and we haven't seen a trace of either Nelson's band or the Nisquallys."

With this assurance from Capt. Hewitt, Lt. Slaughter issued an order that campfires would be permitted that night. He knew that his men needed a cooked meal badly. Fires had not been permitted since the morning Price was killed.

Lt. Slaughter set up his headquarters in a small log cabin where he could find some protection from the persistant rains. That night, to warm the inside of the cabin for a conference, Lt. Slaughter had a large fire built just outside of the open cabin door. About ten that night the tired army lieutenant conferred with the other officers at the encampment.

The warm glow from the campfire permeated the room, and shadows flickered cozily against the cabin walls. It was cheerful and bright despite the circumstances of the war.

Lt. Slaughter began the discussion of the military strategy to be used against Nelson's band, by far the most dangerous of the various tribes in the war. Just as he raised a fist to emphasize a point a musket shot echoed through the night. The young officer stood for a long moment, his mouth partly open as though he meant to go on speaking, then he crumpled to the cabin floor.

For just one moment Lt. Slaughter had been perfectly silhouetted against the campfire, giving the Indians, who had infiltrated past the sentries on duty, a chance to put a musket ball squarely through his heart.

The next day a detachment of soldiers left camp with the body of Lt. Bill Slaughter. They carried him down the White River to the village of Seattle, arriving on December 6th. At Seattle the little steamer *Traveller* transported the body to Fort Steilacoom.

On December 9th Lt. Slaughter was buried with full military honors in the cemetery at Fort Steilacoom. The war was over for Bill Slaughter. ●

SHAKESPEARE CAME TO TOWN

(Continued from page 8)

real, professional stage actor.

Weeks went by and other subjects of interest had shoved the strange prospector into the background by the time he again came into the store and bought another half gallon tin pail. Shakespeare was back in town and the word was passed around.

After Shakespeare was satisified that his burro had had enough beer he came in to the bar and accepted drinks. I ordered a "flusey" for him, that was a whisky three times as big as the present day shot glass drink. Others followed with more drinks and everyone was hoping that he would put on another show for us. A "flusey" cost 25¢ and at that rate the evening's entertainment wouldn't cost a man more then 50¢ including his own drink. When Shakespeare moved away from the bar you could have heard a mouse sneeze. There were people even standing outside the door and windows hoping to hear the performance.

That evening was just as wonderful as the first time Shakespeare had appeared in town. When he left the following day no one knew any more about him than at his previous visit.

Again weeks went by and then one of our clerks shouted, "Shakespeare is back!" There was the same routine of the pails of beer shared by the man and his burro and then the offers of drink at the bar and an evening of real high class drama.

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Shakespeare became a part of our lives when his trips for supplies became regular. Though there were those who would have liked to find his mine no one of them had the stamina to follow the tortuous miles through sandy washes, past the rough, sharp pointed tuffa formations, skirt the dry salt lake where the sun reflected off the white surface and then climb up into the almost unexplored Panamint Range. Shakespeare had found gold, and from his spending the mine was a good one, but it took a strong man to walk five days across the desert for supplies after working weeks in the mine.

The week that Shakespeare should have appeared in town and didn't was a somber time for all. The whole town showed concern. As the time stretched into two weeks and still no Shakespeare there were those who wanted to get up a search party, but the plan was dropped. No one knew where in the vast Panamint Range Shakespeare was mining. No one in the area had ever seen him anywhere except in Johannesburg. People were willing to help hunt for him but helpless to do anything about it.

The stocky little prospector with the wonderful voice never came to town again. The community that had received so much pleasure from his trips was saddened. They asked miners going toward the Panamints to watch for any sign of the prospector and his burro, but there was no clue, and to this day no one that I know of has ever seen Shakespeare again or found his mine. ●

OREGON'S HOMESTEAD MURDERS

(Continued from page 33)

able of producing abundant crops.

Alma's mother had joined the daughter in the Hood River area a few months later. But after March 9, 1900, no word had been heard from either of them although both had always been good about writing. Prior to that letters describing the beauty of Oregon, Mt. Hood, Mt. Helens and Mt. Adams as well as pictures of the countryside had been sent to relatives back east.

Nesbitt wrote letter after letter urging them to let him know how they were when he did not hear from his mother and sister. These efforts failing, he wrote directly to Norman Williams, asking the homesteader if he knew anything about the women.

Norman Williams wrote back saying Alma Nesbitt and her mother had left Oregon without telling anyone where they were going.

Nesbitt then placed ads in the Hood River paper and others nearby asking anyone who had information about his mother and sister to please get in touch with him.

There was something about the situation that aroused Nesbitt's suspicions because before his sister stopped writing she had hinted about a romance and possible marriage with Norman Williams. Therefore he thought the man knew more than he was telling.

His suspicions aroused to the point of action, Nesbitt took the train to Hood River, Oregon, and hired a livery team and drove out to the homesteads belonging to Williams and his sister and mother. Both places were abandoned.

Nesbitt had read a great many murder stories, and, playing a hunch, he started digging about Williams' place. He found nothing until something induced him to go into the henhouse. Probing all around, he found a piece of sacking on which there was a dark stain and two, long, silver-grey hairs. The striped sacking reminded him of a sack in which his mother had placed some bedding for shipment when she was going out to Oregon.

This was not much to go on, but Nesbitt took the rotting sacking with the stain and the grey hairs to District Attorney Fred Wilson in The Dalles and swore out a warrant for Norman Williams' arrest.

Playing another hunch, Wilson and Nesbitt went to Vancouver, Washington, which at that time had the reputation of being the Gretna Green of the Northwest. By searching the records they found that on July 25, 1899, Alma Nesbitt and Norman Williams had been married by a Justice of the Peace. Checking up on Williams' past, it was ascertained he had worked as a hired man on various Oregon farms, and some in Iowa. It was also discovered that he had married a woman in Dufur, Washington, in 1898 and deserted her.

When Norman Williams was finally arrested in Bellingham and brought to trial in The Dalles in May, 1904, there was a large crowd in the courtroom with standing room only left around the walls. Newspapers as far as San Francisco and Seattle sent men to cover the trial.

Prosecutor Wilson told the jury the state would prove that Norman Williams drove the two women to his homestead on March 9, 1900, and there murdered them in cold blood; that he buried their bodies in the ground until such time as he had gathered a great pile of brush and stumps and that this had furnished the women's funeral pyre. As a motive, the prosecuting attorney said the state would prove that Norman Williams had another wife living when he married Alma Nesbitt; that Alma had discovered the fact, and when her mother arrived she was

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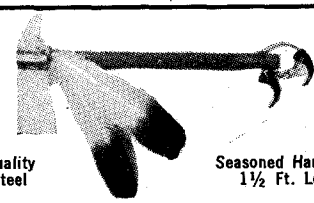

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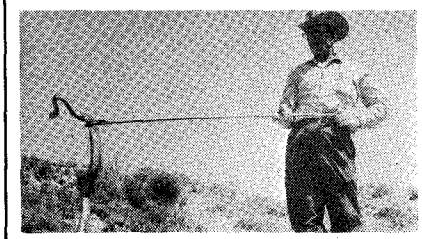

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planning to leave Williams. He claimed Norman Williams wanted Alma's homestead as it had proven to be a better one than his own.

John H. Hull, United States Attorney of Portland, Oregon, told how, late in 1900, the defendant had brought to his office a document purportedly signed by Alma Nesbitt in which she relinquished her homestead in Williams' favor. The transfer had been made. Then a clerk in the land office who chanced to remember pretty Alma Nesbitt when she filed in 1899, became suspicious of the signature, which was a very poor imitation. A check-up with the original document in Washington, D.C., proved the relinquishment to be a forgery.

When Dr. Victoria Hampton was called to the stand after making a microscopic examination and tests of the stains on the piece of rotting sacking, she announced in a strong, decisive voice: "The stains on this sacking are of human blood."

Newsmen wrote that the prisoner, Williams, was seen to flinch and a muscle in his cheek twitched for several moments.

Dr. Hampton continued, "Matted in the stains I found several fine hairs, nearly white in color. They are human hairs and they were quite obviously torn from the head before death. Microscopic examination shows the roots still cling to the hair. Violence was surely used."

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The state rested after the doctor's testimony. Then Henry E. McGinn, reputedly Oregon's greatest criminal lawyer, spoke with eloquence. He called no witnesses, nor did he permit Norman Williams to take the stand, as the crowd had hoped he would. McGinn rested his case solely on the premise that the state had not shown a *corpus delicti*, which he explained to the jury meant the state had not proved that anybody had been done to death, much less Alma Nesbitt and her mother.

"Gentlemen," he cried dramatically, "you cannot hang a man on mere suspicion, especially when the fact that death has taken place has not been completely proved. For all that any of us know, Alma Nesbitt and her mother are still alive, well and happy in some new location. You cannot legally find a man guilty of a crime that you are not positive he committed.

But the jury could—*and did!* A first degree murder verdict was reached in less than four hours.

An appeal was taken to the State Supreme Court. In denying a rehearing the judges summed up in part:

"The strict rule contended by the defendant would operate completely to shield a criminal from punishment for the most atrocious crime. No universal rule can be laid down in regard to the *corpus delicti.* The body of the crime may be proved by the best evidence which is capable of being adduced. There was sufficient evidence, without commenting on it, in the case at bar, in our opinion to establish the deaths of the alleged victims within the rules of the law."

Alma Nesbitt Williams' homestead title was cleared by court process and its title eventually became vested in relatives, but her brother advised them to sell it and try to forget the whole tragedy. He returned to Iowa satisfied that he had brought the man who killed his mother and sister to justice.

Norman Williams was hanged in the Wasco County, Oregon, jail yard on July 21st. 1905. ●

DEVIL'S DEN OF THIEVES

(Continued from page 42)

bles are common. Although no building has anything like a roof over it, I feel I have located the drugstore and four saloons. You can tell the difference by the shape of the broken bottles strewn in back of them. The assay office was found in the same manner by looking for broken remains of the small porcelain crucibles. No church was discovered and there may not have been any. The inhabitants of Charleston were not noted for their religious fervor and the frequent burials were handled by the churches in Tombstone. Written records are so scanty that it is not possible in this century to confirm the identity of some of the buildings from the last century.

Charleston was far more than just another collection of buildings. Its inhabitants, as disreputable and wild as they were, went well with the location and with one another. If there was ever a wild bunch of characters thrown together by chance and circumstance this was it! Although murders and shootings were part of everyday life, the crime rate was lower than it is in some of our big city slums today. There were simply too many thieves already in town for an outsider to get away with anything new. Where Millville across the river was a work place, Charleston was a "fun town" and anything went. The list of blue-bloods and leading citizens at one time or another included most of the more disreputable men of the Old West. They fell into three lots: the miners, the smugglers and the gamblers, saloon keepers and joy girls who preyed on them both. This Devil's Den of Thieves welcomed the Clanton Clan and sheltered such alleged killers as Jerry Barton and his robber friends. All were held in check by such outstanding citizens as Judge James Burnett, whose usual fine was everything the captured criminal had in his possession.

Jerry Barton was the combination river town constable, part time saloon keeper, and full time bouncer. His specialty was knocking skulls together until they cracked, and he was supposed to concentrate on rolling drunks and shooting customers. He shot and killed his own partner, Mr. Merril, plus killing two men by giving them rabbit punches with his huge fist. Lawlessness included ordinary shootings involving drunken ranch hands to murderous attacks on mining officials going about their own business peacefully.

On January 14th, 1881, normally nonchalant Charleston was shocked out of its indifference by the brutal shooting of Mr. W.P. Schneider as he was walking back to his mill after lunch. Mr. Schneider, the chief engineer of the Corbin Mill across the river, had come to his favorite restaurant and while warming his hands at the potbellied stove was passing the time talking to a friend. His comments about the coolness of the January morning brought some objections from a local desperado known only as "Johnny-Behind-The-Deuce." Newspaper accounts in the Tombstone *Epitaph* record the lively exchange as being painfully polite, even though decidedly unfriendly. This forced politeness may have been the reason for Johnny-Behind-The-Deuce losing his temper because he threatened to shoot and kill Mr. Schneider at the first opportunity that presented itself. No one paid much attention to this needless threat, and after lunch Mr. Schneider unsuspectingly began to walk back to his engine room. Johnny was far angrier and more dangerous than witnesses had believed. He ambushed the unarmed engineer and shot him down in cold blood.

This one time, the good citizens of Charleston stood up and promptly captured the murdering gambler. Tempers got mighty hot and many cowboys gathered, promising to "release Johnny from

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custody" and darkly hinting what their ultimate plans for him were. Telegrams were sent back and forth between Tombstone and the mine offices, and the prisoner was hustled off to the Cochise County jail for safe-keeping. When a crowd of helpful miners approached the escorting peace officers, the murderer was let go and told to run for it. He barely made it to Vogan's saloon on Allen Street in the center of town. Jumping off his horse, he ran inside begging for protection from the on-coming lynch mob. As usual, the mob had good reason to see that justice was done "now," but Marshal Sippy quickly organized a protective posse and held them at bay. Enlisting the aid of Virgil Earp and Deputy Sheriff Behan, the marshall succeeded in getting Johnny-Behind-The-Deuce aboard a spring-wagon and spirited him out of town. Some overly ambitious citizens tried several times to halt the wagon and secure the prisoner for themselves, but the marshal's posse was the stronger and they did not succeed. The prisoner made it safely to jail in Tucson by January 17th, and it is presumed that he was eventually tried and convicted. Not much more than a year later, still another senseless murder took place in bloody Charleston, again claiming a mine official as its victim.

One evening in 1882, four men were sitting in the office of the Tombstone Mill and Mining Company when the front door was thrown open and a fusilade of shots fired directly at Mr. M.R. Peel, who was employed by the company. Surprised to find three other men in the room with their unsuspecting victim, the assassins dashed out into the darkness without attempting to steal anything, mounted their waiting horses and tore off cross-country. A posse organized the next morning of March 26th found nothing. Poor Mr. Peel was buried in the Tombstone cemetery with the others. It was rumored that the three bandits were intent on stealing bullion belonging to the mining company, but this could not be correct because everyone in wicked Charleston surely knew that all silver bars were stored in the iron-doored bullion box across the river at Richard Gird's house. One account has Mr. Peel sitting in the Millville House when he was shot. In either case, Mr. M.R. Peel was dead but the bandits were not. They made their escape and were never caught.

Charleston was born shortly after Tombstone began to prosper and died a fast death when Tombstone declined. Part of its reason for being was the ore taken out of the fabulous silver stopes under the Tombstone Hills. In those days there was plenty of silver and not enough water. Today the mines are flooded and are completely closed down. In the 1880's the heavy ore was hauled downhill nine miles to the stamping mills on the east bank of the river. Around them grew a collection of company buildings and squatters' shanties. The miners worked at the "stamps" in Millville but came across the river to carouse in Charleston. There was plenty of dancing and Charleston boasted a luxurious hotel, of sorts. Of course, luxury in frontier times was a very flexible thing and capable of all kinds of interpretations. Being standing drunk and sleeping dry was a luxury to many.

King Charles' town also laid claim to being the commercial center of the San Pedro Valley. This was close to the truth, amazing as it may seem today. Before the growth of Ambos Nogales, the port-of-entry on the Mexican Border south of

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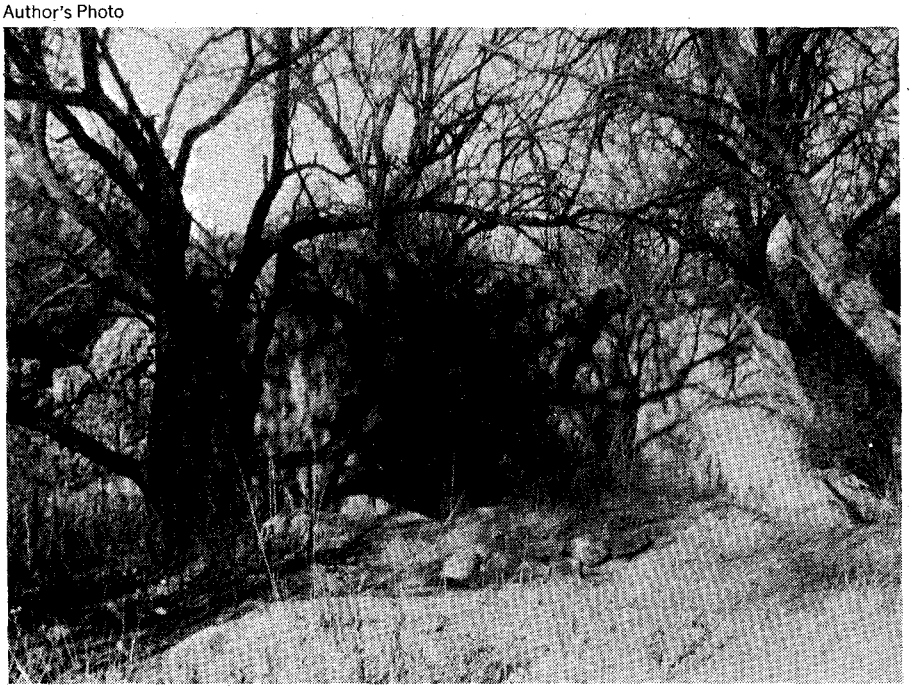

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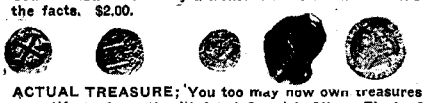

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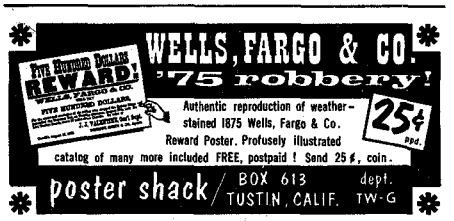

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Tucson, this was the major crossing place, legal and otherwise. The stores here were unusually well stocked and there were more stores than could be expected. Newspaper accounts record the mining news quite well, but could not say much about the "silent trade" done mostly at night. Smuggling was a big business around Charleston. Stealing cattle was not unknown. There were wide bands of almost unbroken high ground running on both sides of the river directly down into Sonora. Cattle was rustled on either side, and hustled back again when it was prudent to do so. Mexican cattle that had to be driven at a dead run for miles on a dark night often turned up so bloodshot and blue that local butchers were forced to euphemistically call it veal. There was a lot of longhorn "blue veal" sold to miners on weekends in town.

Some of the Mexican trade was legal, too. Even more than now, most of northern Mexico in the 1880's was isolated from the rest of the country. Mexican duties often were outrageously high and usually so unpredictable that ranchers on both side of "the Line" preferred doing business in bustling Charleston. Famous names like Zeckendorf, Sam Katzenstein, Herra and McClure, and even Springer & Hacks were well known in the valley. The San Pedro was a main north-south trade route, but today the flow of goods has completely shifted to Nogales to the west.

Nearby Fort Huachuca contributed its share to the night life, and almost destroyed what was left of old Charleston during World War II when troops shot up and vandalized some of the remaining buildings.

It was the flooding of the mines that caused the death of Charleston by drowning. The pumps began to draw substantial amounts of water in 1881 and were deluged by torrents before 1885. Then on May 12, 1886, the main hoist and pumping house of the Grand Central Mine burned down, and both the Grand Central and the large Contention Mine had to close because of the rising water. The next year, on May 3rd, there were a number of strong earthquake shocks that seemed to change the flow of ground water, increased the flooding and also reduced the amount of surface water in the San Pedro River.

Founded in 1878, a scant 10 years later Charleston was almost dead. When the mines closed there was no more ore to haul downhill to the four huge Millville "stamps" and smelters. The two communities died peacefully together. By June 14, 1889, Charleston's obituary was already written, and everyone moved away. Squatters later moved in and for a few years there was a floating population that existed among the abandoned buildings. A little silver mining and a lot of water pumping went on in the Tombstone Hills but even that stopped in January of 1911. As far as mining was concerned, everything died. But Charleston never stirred because it had already been dead for a decade. That is the way you will find it today.

Cross the tracks, park your car, wade the San Pedro River, and find yourself 80 years in the past. Walk down Main Street and enter the old adobe buildings hidden all around you. Don't put it off too long. Charleston can't wait forever. ●

FIELD MATRON TO COMANCHES

(Continued from page 35)

of the United States Indian Service Commission.

Her duties were to teach the Comanche women about health, sanitation, the white man's culture and sewing. Also, how to cook foods other than their usual boiled beef, beans and pon, Indian bread. She was provided with simple medicines such as were available on drugstore shelves as well as a good team of horses, a buggy and feed for the animals.

Always a diplomatic woman, Mrs. Becker would stop her horses at an Indian home, go inside and quietly begin to help with whatever work was in progress. When she knew of a better way or an easier way to do things she showed the Indians. If she had some small article with her that would be of assistance she used it. But she only showed the other women, never urged her way upon them. Also, she studied the Comanche language.

After a time the Indian women began to help her learn their way of talking. When they saw that Mrs. Becker's medicines helped them they let her know when there was illness in a family. They also began to stop by the mission to visit at her office.

Making use of these opportunities, Mrs. Becker started teaching the Indian women how to make quilt blocks from the bright print material she kept on hand. The quilt blocks appealed to the Indian women and they liked to do this type of sewing. Soon they were putting the blocks together and making quilt tops and then quilting them.

The Reverend Becker made big square quilting frames that rested upon the backs of four chairs. Sixteen women could stand around the frames and quilt. Indians are very social and the Comanche women enjoyed these sessions very much. Mrs. Becker organized a sewing and cooking club and many happy, gossipy hours were spent in this way. The club is still in existence and the Comanche women still make quilts and sell them. They buy articles for their church with the proceeds.

The Rev. Kohfeld retired in 1907 due to his wife's health. The Rev. Becker

Photo Courtesy Wm. H. Becker

Quanah Parker outside the tent home in which he lived.

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was appointed missionary and his wife was made his assistant but she did not leave government service.

As the years went by the feeling of the Comanches gradually changed. A few joined the church and many sent their children to Post Oak Mission School. Big George Kowena became a deacon in the church. By this time there were 12 buildings on the mission grounds.

Quanah Parker never did become a church member and there were others who could never quite accept the whites. There was Pewo-Weno who did not attend church or believe in the missionary lady. He injured himself and an infection, apparently blood poisoning, developed in his legs. This illness was quite far along before he sent for Mrs. Becker. Hurrying to see him, Mrs. Becker found Pewo-Weno sitting in a chair fully dressed, even to his boots. It was too late to help the Indian. He died while Mrs. Becker was there.

Many of the Comanche men and women living today were brought into the world by Mrs. Becker. The Indian women welcomed her assistance long before they would allow her to call in a doctor. Upon at least one occasion she ran into a bad experience that could have ended in tragedy.

Louisiana, husband of a Comanche woman, sent for Mrs. Becker when his wife had complications at childbirth. While she was sterilizing scissors and some cord to use when the baby was born Louisiana said he would just step into the other room and see how his wife was getting along. A few minutes later he came back.

"Him big boy," Louisiana announced.

The baby had arrived!

Mrs. Becker took the scissors and cord from the boiling water as quickly as she could.

"Hurry," she said, "I must cut the cord."

"Me cut it," Louisiana said.

"What did you cut it with?"

The Indian fished deep down into his pocket and brought out a dirty knife. "With this."

Mrs. Becker shuddered to think that such an implement had been used on the newborn baby, but she was not a woman to waste time on something that had already been done.

"I will tie the cord," she said.

"I tied it." Louisiana jammed his hand down into his pocket once more and brought out a tangled wad of twine. "Used this," he said.

The baby lived and showed no ill effects.

Anna Hiebert came to Post Oak Mission to help with the work in 1909. She was with the mission, but often went with Mrs. Becker to help out when people were sick.

In 1919 Anna Hiebert married Joe Gomez, supervisor of the mission grounds. Mrs. Gomez stopped work at the mission to have six children and did not return until they were able to take care of themselves.

Mrs. Becker's 28 years as a field matron were continuous even though she and the Rev. Becker were parents of six children, four of whom were born at the mission.

The Becker children played with the Comanche school children and learned the language of their Indian friends. William Becker, second eldest of the children and now a teacher at Cameron College, Lawton, remembers Comanche as a beautiful language, filled with many similies having to do with nature.

The mission family did not miss all of the illnesses that struck the Comanches even though Mrs. Becker was very careful when an epidemic was in progress. Once when typhoid was prevalent six members of the family were down with the disease at one time.

But times were changing. The Comanches began to allow Mrs. Becker to bring a doctor when illnesses were serious. Dr. J.R. Hood of Indiahoma and Dr. J.A. Perisho of Cache were the two she called most often. Later they also went to the Kiowa Indian Hospital east of Lawton. Mrs. Becker usually took them in the family car.

Gradually the Comanche learned to live in the new way. They had long since moved from their tepees into houses. When pressure cookers came on the market Mrs. Becker taught the women how to use them, and each summer she and the Indian women canned hundreds of quarts of vegetables and meat.

In 1933 Mrs. Becker resigned as field matron because of ill health but continued to assist her husband in his mission work until her death in 1938. She had made many loyal friends among the Comanches and ended her long years of service with a comforting feeling of a work well done. ●

EARLY DAY FIRE DEPARTMENTS

(Continued from page 27)

engines or "man killers", as they were called, were unnecessary. With the larger number of hydrants, more sections of hose distributed at different points throughout town and permanent firemen centrally located, emergencies were taken care of faster and more efficiently than formerly.

Other volunteer fire companies on the West Coast were organized earlier than

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the Warren Engine Company No. 1 of Carson City, which was established June 17, 1863, but this company continues to operate in Carson City, and it claims to be the oldest volunteer group in the West today.

Following its organization, the company purchased a Hunneman engine that had been built by Wm. Hunneman of Boston, an apprentice of Paul Revere. First used by the Warren Engine Company of Boston, it was later shipped around the Horn to San Francisco, then sent to Marysville in 1863. When Marysville's volunteers disbanded, the engine was sold to the Carson volunteers, who called themselves the Warrens after the original company in Boston.

The fire laddies put on a demonstration when their pride and joy engine was received. Throwing water for a distance of 209 feet with 100 feet of hose was quite a feat to be proud of.

Bright red shirts and fancy leather belts were bought to dress up the boys after $2000 was raked in from proceeds of a grand ball where Carsonites enjoyed an evening of dancing and a midnight supper furnished by ladies of the town. Throughout the years it has been built up by donations, benefits and gifts.

Members of this company are not limited to the Carson area, and as they are co-owners of the fire engine and all equipment, they can take it where they please. At present they own five good, usable fire engines and considerable up-to-date fire fighting equipment. Members are limited to 25 active men and a member may qualify for the exempt list after twenty years of continuous service.

Unique pictures of charter members of the company hang on the walls of the engine house and a few pieces of antique equipment are on display, also. Their most widely used piece of equipment is a 750-gallon tank pumper recently given to the company by the State of Nevada in recognition of many years of service in protecting state property in and around the capital.

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Keen rivalry between fire companies to get "first water on a fire" caused many fights and arguments. Fists would fly in the midst of the rapid heave-ho of a bucket brigade. An alarm bell was loud enough to alert the entire populace who would turn out in force to witness a noisy, major event.

Most bitter rival of the Warren boys in Carson City was Abe Curry's laddies who possessed a hand pump engine and later one of those "new fangled" steam engines.

Fire companies were often the focal point of community life. It was customary for men to drop into the fire house on cold days where they would sidle up to the huge pot-bellied stove and listen to or join in discussions concerning politics, religion and major events of the day. Sometimes such opinions turned into rather rowdy affairs, and respectable ladies had to detour to another street so they would not be offended by the vile language emanating from the building.

Many social events and celebrations would not have been possible without the firemen. For a Fourth of July celebration, fire companies would diligently polish their engines and practice drills every night a month ahead of time. Virginia City volunteers paraded for the Fourth wearing massive silver shields and silver mounted belts made from Comstock silver weighing no less than 43 pounds.

Each new settlement on the frontier, each new mining camp or farming community had a common interest: to protect the lives and possessions of its people from all dangers, including fire. ●

STRANGE LIFE OF MICKEY FREE

(Continued from page 13)

delegation were put in jail in Leavenworth while en route back to Arizona.

From there they were hustled off to Fort Marion where the other Chiricahuas had been taken by force. In this group were quite a few Indians who had been loyal to the United States and served the Army as scouts. Mickey Free was packed along to Florida with the others. No distinction was made between good Indians and bad Indians.

Mr. Palmer notes that this incident marked a low point in United States Indian relations because the loyal Indians had been treated exactly the same as the renegades and received ill treatment from "an ungrateful and perfidious government."

Many of the red men accustomed to the high and dry climate of Arizona sickened in the humid atmosphere of the Florida lowlands and died. After several years the government began to move the Indians back to Oklahoma and the Mescalero Reservation in New Mexico. Geronimo was sent to Oklahoma and later appeared at the World's Fair in Chicago and also made a trip to Washington.

There is no report on Mickey Free's captivity in Florida, but it is known that he eventually returned to Arizona.

Mr. Palmer's intensive research on Mickey Free unearthed the fact that he had a son named Willie. This man was dead by the time Mr. Palmer tried to locate him. However, Willie had a daughter, Rosie, who was living on the reservation. Mr. Palmer contacted the girl but she knew little about her famous grandfather.

As noted earlier, Mr. Palmer contacted Judge Donald MacIntosh. This man told Palmer that he had seen Mickey Free when he, MacIntosh, was but fifteen years old. At that time Mickey was a scout and interpreter for the Army and wore a blue uniform, high boots and carried two big dragoon pistols. The judge said Mickey was quite a "big shot" among his people because of his work with the Army.

Judge MacIntosh said Mickey Free had three wives, one of whom was Edith, a Tonto Apache, who was the mother of the boy Willie. He declared that Mickey was quite rough with his wives and that when things didn't go to suit him he took out his ill-feeling on them, beating them with a black snake whip.

Judge MacIntosh said that the next time he saw Mickey Free was in 1901 and that the scout was a "dried up, bent, slight man who was rather pathetic." He was far from the "big shot" he had been in his heyday.

Mickey outlived all of his wives. The last one, Nalenechene, passed away on February 26, 1912. Mr. Palmer noted that the man's name was still on the 1915 census at San Carlos Reservation. At that time his age was listed as 55 years. Mickey Free's name was missing from the 1916 roll at the reservation, so that it can be assumed he died either late in 1915 or early 1916.

Mr. Palmer concluded that the record showing Mickey's age as 55 in 1915 was evidently in error because his stepbrother, Santiago Ward, claimed Mickey was 12 when he was taken prisoner in 1860. If that were the case he would have been 67 in 1915. However, if Mickey Free was only six in 1880 he would have been around 61 in 1915. So the controversial man was somewhere between 61 and 67 when he died.

It has already been noted that Mickey Free was survived by a son, Willie. He

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also had a daughter by the name of Fannie who married Carter Josay and had three children, Freda, Jackson and Pauline. All were married in 1950 when Mr. Palmer wrote his article, and all were living on the Fort Apache Reservation.

Mr. Palmer concluded his article by saying that in all probability Mickey Free was a Mexican with blue eyes, red hair and light complexion, but that in two generations his progeny assumed all of the characteristics of full-blooded Apache Indians.

Mr. Palmer believes that the Apaches simply absorbed Mickey Free as they absorbed many of their captives. This is reasonable because the man lived like an Apache all of his life and entered the Happy Hunting Grounds like an Apache. His sons, daughters and grandchildren also lived as Apaches.

If Mickey Free was sinister and cruel as some claim, then it was doubtless because he was taught to be like that by his Apache captors.

It is not to be overlooked, however, that he did serve the United States Army well as a scout, guide and interpreter.

In all, Mickey Free emerges as a colorful character, typical of his times and environment, with such faults and virtues as human beings possess. ●

THERE'S GOLD IN THE KLONDIKE

(Continued from page 25)

a few shovels full of dirt, panned out in his cabin over a wash tub.

Berry was working along sporadically by himself. Early in November, he reached the rich bedrock. From the first single pan he weighed out $57 in gold nuggets and dust.

Berry knew his days of poverty were over, so he hired men to help him haul the muck up with a windlass and pile it on a dump. With the spring thaw he would shovel this muck into a sluice box and wash out the gold.

Yes, mining methods up North on the Klondike were quite different than they were in the California Mother Lode or even on the Cariboo. At first it was just a simple case of the prospector wandering about along the streams, staking a claim and panning out the flakes and the dust. The long dark winters were nearly as much of a problem as the frozen ground.

Prospecting was confined to the banks and bars of the small streams. There during the short summer it was easy to pan out the gold dust. Anything deeper than a foot or so was considered impossible to reach because of permafrost.

Most of the miners along the Klondike streams used a rocker or cradle. This was a box placed on a pair of rockers, much like those on the bottom of a rocking chair. A screen or plate was used to sort out the large rocks, and below was a sloping shelf covered with small riffles.

The rocker was placed beside a stream or small pool of water and mounted on a level platfrom. The miner stood beside the cradle with a long-handled water dipper in one hand and rocked the box with the other. He ladled water onto the mass of dirt and gravel and rocked and rocked.

The water and the rocking motion carried the gold through the holes in the screen, and they fell onto the shelf below. The gold dust and nuggets were caught by the riffles, in much the same way as in a sluice box.

If two or more miners were working together, one carried gravel and kept the hopper loaded, while the other rocked. Several times a day the riffles were taken out and washed carefully in a tub of water. The material collected in the bottom of the tub was carefully panned out and the gold collected.

Rocking was slow and laborious, but on the Klondike there were many places where it was the only method possible. With a cradle, a pair of stout men could clean about two cubic yards of dirt in a day. With a sluice box and plenty of water, the same pair could clean eight yards of dirt a day.

Tagish Charlie and Skookum George averaged well over $100 a day on the bars of Stewart River using a rocker and carrying all the water needed a hundred yards up hill. Nearby on the Klondike River, six men took out $35,000 in two months from a single bar with a small rocker.

In the very early days the bars were fired and burned over just after the spring break-up or thaw. The trash and branches which collected on the bars was lit, and the heat of the fire thawed the ground a little. Then the prospector could get down to the deeper and richer deposits.

This soon led to a firing and thawing system which boosted the output of gold in the region. The "skim" type minings were soon abandoned.

Firing and thawing to bedrock opened rich ground which was once thought impossible to reach. Building a small fire would thaw the ground beneath for a short distance. This dirt was worked and fire built in the depression. Repeated often enough, bedrock could be reached.

It was an expensive and wasteful procedure. The fire was never confined, so most of the heat naturally went up. A great deal more ground than held paydirt was thawed out and reduced the average amount of gold per yard of the

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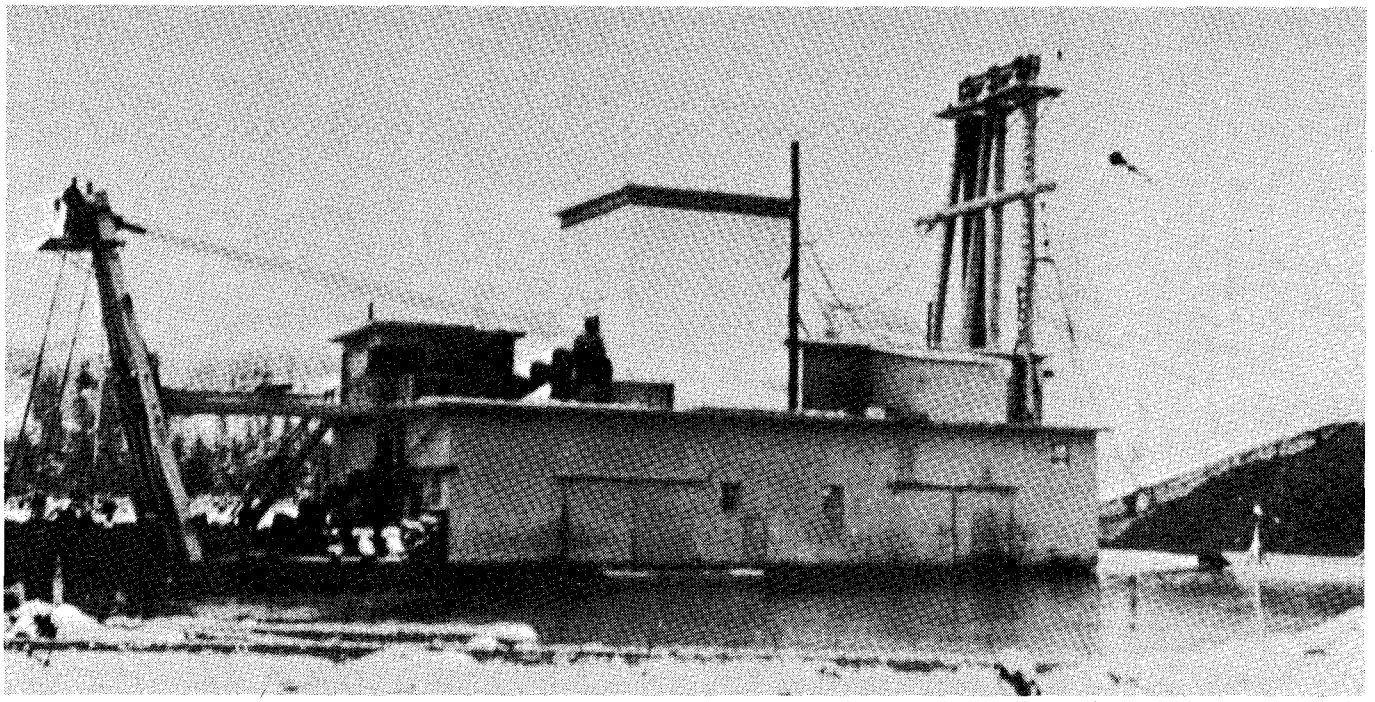

This photo of Canadian Klondike Mining Co. Dredge # 6 was taken in 1906 on Bonanza Creek.

dirt actually worked. It also increased the cost of working in the same proportions, for cordwood was expensive.

During the long winter of 1897, the miners discussed ways to improve firing methods. The subject was a favorite topic at the Dawson City bars. Hundreds of ways were thought up and all were thrown out as useless. Only two methods stood out and remained as permanent ways to thaw to bedrock.

One, thawing by steam, was the best; yet it required the most equipment. The other, thawing by coal oil or gasoline flames, was not as effective but was certainly the most portable.

Thawing by coal oil or gasoline flames used a rig similar to an enlarged plumber's blowtorch. The intense hot flame was directed against the frozen earth, and the permafrost melted for a short distance. The cost of gasoline or coal oil was $1.00 a gallon, which was pretty high. The old-fashioned way of burning a fire on top of the frozen ground was used a great deal of the time. Underground the smoke made work a coughing and eye-stinging affair.

The steam generator or boiler burned cord-wood in great quantities, and it cost plenty. The steam at 40 pounds was forced through a flexible hose into "points".

These points were lengths of 1/2-inch pipe five or six feet long. The working end was hooked up to the flexible hose. Near the plug there were three or four holes about an 1/8 inch in diameter, and the steam escaped at a great rate from the small ports. These points were pushed against the frozen gravel which thawed at an astonishing rate.

The points were pushed into the frozen wall until completely buried for their full length. Then they were left usually over night to thaw the full face of the tunnel or cut. This steam method did more work with the same amount of wood than open burning, and there was more control of the area thawed.

With improved hoisting machinery, better sluice boxes and riffles, much ground was worked with a real profit; ground which would not be touched in the early days of the Klondike area. After the biggest part of the gold rush was over, dredging was suggested.

One engineer said, "While I was in London, a syndicate owned a valuable piece of ground in the Klondike. They consulted me about putting a dredge on it. After every aspect of the question had been threshed out, it was decided that the older method of steam and sluice box would very likely prove the best."

He went on to explain, "The dredge would have to enter by the St. Michael route and then much too late the first season to do much more than arrange to have it hauled by sleighs to the field of work.

"Most of the work of putting together the machinery would have to be done and it would come in in small parts, small enough to be handled by the men. This, together with the enormous freight rates of the time, would pile the cost of even a medium capacity machine to practically a prohibitive sum."

The idea was abandoned at the time. However, it wasn't long until John A. McPherson brought in a dredge. He was associated with Hines of Cincinnati. They sent the machinery and lumber for the dredge construction over the newly started White Pass Railway.

In the summer of 1898, the railway had reached the head of Lake Bennett. The dredge machinery was one of the first freight shipments over this portion of the White Pass and Yukon Railway. From Lake Bennett, it was hauled to the Lewis River and then to the Big Salmon River.

In spite of the difficulties McPherson encountered, the material was safely landed, the hull constructed, and the dredge launched. The machinery was erected and work actually started during the first week in September '98. This alone is something of a record.

It is unusual in such new and largely unknown conditions for anything to be completed in a single season. Hines and McPherson did take all fall to get the machine adjusted in this northern wilderness.

McPherson came back the following spring, but was in a serious accident and was hospitalized for many months. His friend and partner, Hines, tried to run the dredge near the Big Salmon River. But, he became disheartened, quit, and ordered the machine to be hauled downstream to be sold.

At Dawson City the dredge found a buyer. There it was dismantled and hauled by team and wagon to Claim #42 Below on lower Bonanza Creek.

There it was rebuilt and put to work. Even though the ground was frozen solid, clear down to bed rock, the monster worked out the claim in less than two seasons! And, at a profit to both the owners of the fantastic machine and the claim owners!

This same dredge was moved up to *Discovery,* where it was worked on that claim over again, for *Discovery* was completely worked out by the hand system.

The ground was thawed by steam to

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save wear and tear on the dredge and to increase its output. Even though the cost of cordwood was prohibitive, it was continued for the entire first season. The clanking monster must have paid off and paid off royally. The exact profit figures and the amount of gold dug out by this dredge were never told.

The owners of the dredge purchased the rest of Skookum Jim's claim—Claim #1 above *Discovery*. Skookum Jim worked on it six years, and he took out over $200,000. Yet, the dredge owners were perfectly willing to give $60,000 in cash for the remains of his claim.

This shows more than anything else, the thoroughness of dredging when compared to the old system of firing and sluicing.

Dredging requires a lot of money to begin properly and it requires a *company*—a wealthy one at that—to put a dredge to work on the Klondike. Back in '98 during the days of the gold rush, a medium sized dredge would cost $75,000 to $100,000 when transported up to the Klondike and assembled. A larger one would cost even more. Dredge #4, in operation during the 1920's on Bonanza Creek, cost a half a million dollars.

However, it is safe to say a machine with the capacity of 250 yards per hour and this is a very small one as dredges go, would cost at least $150,000.

It is evident the individual prospector had little chance to own a dredge of his own. He would give away the lion's share of gold recovered to a stranger who put up the money for the expensive monster. He was handicapped by the regulations which required payment of $100 a mile of river bed to the government. This was plunked down in cash sixty days after he applied for a permit.

The Canadian Government allowed him to line up only ten miles. This made another $1000, but not only that, the dredge built and put on the river must be approved by the Minister of the Interior. In the early days there was nothing to go on unless the hit and miss diggings from surface to bedrock looked good. But would the dredge pay? This was the big question.

Obviously it did, for at the present time dredges are still working on the Klondike. They are working and reworking the same old creeks and streams and at a profit to the owners.

The good thing about a dredge is the modern machine really does gather all the gold in any area. Yet, to the naturalist and lover of wildlife, they destroy the countryside just as much as strip mining for coal destroys the countryside.

What about the Klondike today? Well, it is still there.

In Dawson City, the weeds grow rankly along the rotten wooden sidewalks. From the dome above the town, the checkerboard pattern of the streets and avenues, laid out in the days of the gold rush, can still be seen. But there are great gaps where the buildings burned, were torn down, or have simply fallen down.

The road to Dawson winds through the Klondike Valley and is made of the pure white channel gravel the prospectors of '98 loved to find. The Klondike River and its valley was a green forested wilderness to anyone there back in '98. Now it is choked with mountains of gravel tailings churned up by the great dredges which came during the depression of the '30's. These tailings run like miniature Alps for miles and miles along the river.

The water of the smaller streams has changed its course and finds its trickling way between the mountains of white gravel. The hills are bare of trees, naked

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Miners working on an alluvial bench on Claim # 6, below Hunker.

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"Green horns," who didn't know where to look for gold, turned tables on old-timers and came up with fortunes.

and scarred by the broken flumes and the pits of the hydraulic mines.

Some of the ground was worked a total of three times. First, the individual miners with their gold pans, rockers, and sluice boxes came along. They took out the coarse nuggets of gold and surface dust. In the early 1900's the dredges moved in and worked over the stream beds, recovering even more gold—gold that had been missed by the simple mining methods.

Later, during the 1930's and continuing to the present, the more modern dredges are working. These modern dredges are taking out about two million dollars worth of Klondike gold each year. Since old George Carmack's day, the Klondike has yielded over $300,000,000 worth of the yellow metal.

Everywhere the remnants of the great stampede can still be found. Here and there one can see rusting picks and shovels, the crumbled boards of ancient sluice boxes, and the miners' cabins with roofs of moss crumbling in from the weight of the winter snows.

And, in the museums they show old photographs, old newspapers, and letters from the bygone days. On the Klondike the aged prospectors, old men, work slowly away on their claims. Still prospecting, hoping and dreaming as they did in the days of '98.

All in all, the land is silent. Here and there the groaning and grunting of the dredge can be heard, sounding like a monster dinosaur plunging through the swamps of the earlier days on this earth.

Down from the mountains, the little streams still stumble and tumble their way. They pick, pick, pick, at the eroding rock and shale and catch a little gold.

Men come and go, seeking El Dorado. They know and I know, somewhere in some little traveled corner of the northern world, in an undiscovered nook or cranny near the Klondike, there is the "Mother" pocket of gold.

With all the prospecting and mining done on the Klondike no one ever discovered the Mother Lode. The source of this tremendous $300,000,000 in dust and nuggets, the rich pocket, the home of the pure gold is still there. It is waiting for the lucky prospector who will find the El Dorado of all men's dreams. ●

CUSTER'S LAST BATTLE

(Continued from page 19)

train waiting on the packers, for we had taken this opportunity to give them practical instruction.

Up to this time we had not seen an Indian, nor any recent signs of them, except one small trail of perhaps a half dozen tepees, evidently of a party of agency Indians on their way to join the hostile camps. The buffalo had all gone west and other game was scarce and wild. The indications were that the Indians were west of the Powder, and information from General Gibbon placed them south of the Yellowstone.

Some of the officers of the right wing before they left expressed their belief that we would all get home by the middle of August.

Major Reno was ordered to scout to the forks of the Powder, then across to Mizpah Creek, follow it down to near its confluence with the Powder; then cross over to Pumpkin Creek, follow it down to the Tongue River, scout up that stream, and rejoin the regiment at the mouth of the Tongue by the time his supplies were exhausted; unless, in the meantime, he should make some discovery that made it necessary to return sooner to make preparations for pursuit. A supply depot was established at the mouth of the Powder, guarded by the

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infantry, at which the wagon-train was left.

General Terry, with his staff and some supplies, took passage on the supply steamer *Far West,* and went up to the mouth of the Tongue.

General Custer, with the left wing, marched to the mouth of the Tongue where we remained until the 19th waiting news from Reno's scout. The grounds where we camped had been occupied by the Indians the previous winter. (Miles City, Montana, was first built on the site of this camp.) The rude shelters for their ponies, built of driftwood, were still standing and furnished fuel for our camp-fires.

A number of their dead, placed upon scaffolds, or tied to the branches of trees, were disturbed and robbed of their trinkets. Several persons rode about exhibiting trinkets with as much gusto as if they were trophies of their valor, and showed no more concern for their desecration than if they had won them at a raffle. Ten days later I saw the bodies of these same persons dead, naked, and mutilated.

On the 19th of June tidings came from Reno that he had found a large trail that led up the Rosebud River. The particulars were not generally known. The camp was full of rumors; credulity was raised to the highest pitch, and we were filled with anxiety and curiosity until we reached Reno's command and learned the details of their discoveries.

They had found a large trail on the Tongue River and had followed it up the Rosebud about forty miles. The number of lodges in the deserted villages was estimated by the number of camp-fires remaining to be about three hundred and fifty. The indications were that the trail was about three weeks old. No Indians had been seen, nor any recent signs.

It is not probable that Reno's movements were known to the Indians, for on the very day Reno reached his farthest point up the Rosebud, the battle of the Rosebud, between General Crook's forces and the Indians, was fought. The two commands were then not more than forty miles apart, but neither knew nor suspected the proximity of the other.

We reached the mouth of the Rosebud about noon on the 21st, and began preparations for the march and the battle of the Little Big Horn.

There were a number of Sioux Indians who never went to an agency except to visit friends and relatives. They camped in and roamed about the Buffalo Country. Their camp was the rendezvous for the agency Indians when they went out for their annual hunts for meat and robes. They were known as the "Hostiles," the different tribes of the Sioux nation.

Many of them were renegade outlaws from the agencies. In their visits to the agencies they were usually arrogant and fomenters of discord. Depredations had been made upon the commerce to the Black Hills, and a number of lives taken by them or by others, for which they were blamed.

The authorities at Washington had determined to compel these Indians to reside at the agencies—hence the Sioux War. Sitting Bull, an Uncpapa Sioux Indian, was the chief of the hostile camp; he had about sixty lodges of followers on whom he could at all times depend. He was the host of the Hostiles, and as such received and entertained their visitors. These visitors gave him many presents, and he was thus enabled to make many presents in return. All visitors paid tribute to him, so he gave liberally to the most influential, the chiefs; one might say, he "put it where it would do the most good."

In this way he became known as the chief of the hostile Indian camp, and the camp was generally known as "Sitting Bull's camp." Sitting Bull was a heavy-set, muscular man, about five feet eight inches in stature, and at the time of the battle of the Little Big Horn was forty-two years of age.

He was the autocrat of the camp—chiefly because he was host. In council his views had great weight, since he was known as a great medicine man. He was a chief, but not a warrior chief. In the war councils he had a voice and vote the same as any other chief. A short time previous to the battle he had "made medicine." He had predicted that the soldiers would attack them and that the soldiers would all be killed. He took no active part in the battle but, as was his custom in time of danger, remained in the village "making medicine." Personally he was regarded as a great coward and a very great liar, "a man with a big head and a little heart."

The command passed the remains of a "Sun-dance" lodge which took place about June 5, and to which I shall again refer. This was always a ceremony of great importance to the Indians. It ranks in interest and importance to the Indians with the graduation or commencement exercises of our civilized communities. In anticipation of this event, the Indians from the agencies had assembled at this camp.

Major James McLaughlin, United States Indian Agent stationed at the Devil's Lake Agency, Dakota, from 1870 to 1881, and at Standing Rock Agency, Dakota, from 1881 to the present time, had made it a point to get estimates of the number of Indians at the hostile camp at the time of the battle. In his opinion, and all who know him will accept it with confidence, about one-third of the whole Sioux nation, including the northern Cheyennes and Arapahoes, were present at the battle; he estimates the number present as between twelve and fifteen thousand; that one out of four is a low estimate in determining the number of warriors present; every male over fourteen years of age may be considered a

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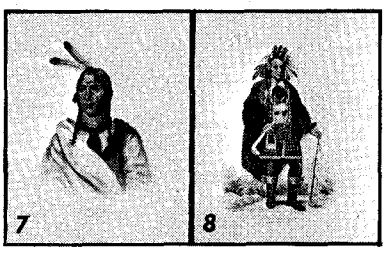

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warrior in a general fight such as was the battle of the Little Big Horn; also, considering the extra hazards of the hunt and expected battle, fewer squaws would accompany the recruits from the agencies.

The minimum strength of their fighting men may then be put down as between twenty-five hundred and three thousand. Information was despatched from General Sheridan that from one agency alone about eighteen hundred lodges had set out to join the hostile camp; but that information did not reach General Terry until several days after the battle.

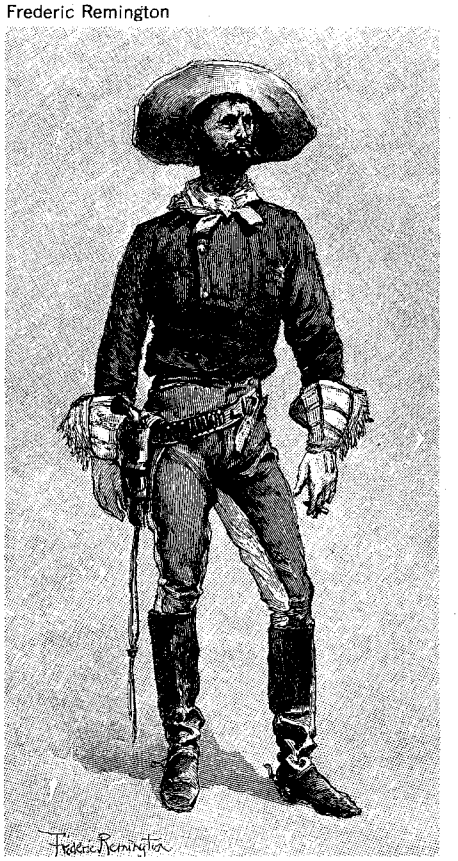
The principal warrior chiefs of the hostile Indians were: "Gall," "Crow King," and "Black Moon," Uncpapa Sioux; "Low Dog," "Crazy Horse," and "Big Road," Ogallala Sioux; "Spotted Eagle," Sans-Arc Sioux; "Hump" of the Minneconjous; and "White Bull" and "Little Horse," of the Cheyennes. To these belong the chief honors of conducting the battle, of whom, however, "Gall," "Crow King," and "Crazy Horse" were the ruling spirits.

Generals Terry, Gibbon, and Custer had a conference on board the steamer *Far West*. It was decided that the 7th Cavalry, under General Custer, should follow the trail discovered by Reno. "Officers' call" was sounded as soon as the conference had concluded. Upon assembling, General Custer gave us our orders. We were to transport on our pack-mules fifteen days' rations of hard bread, coffee, and sugar; twelve days' rations of bacon, and fifty rounds of carbine ammunition per man. Each man was to be supplied with 100 rounds of carbine and 24 rounds of pistol ammunition, to be carried on his person and in his saddle-bags.

Each man was to carry on his horse twelve pounds of oats. The pack-mules sent out with Reno's command were badly used up, and promised seriously to embarrass the expedition. General Custer recommended that some extra forage be carried on the pack-mules.

In endeavoring to carry out this recommendation some troop commanders foresaw the difficulties, and told the General that some of the mules would certainly break down, especially if the extra forage was packed. He replied in an excited manner, quite unusual with him: "Well, gentlemen, you may carry what supplies you please; you will be held responsible for your companies. The extra forage was only a suggestion, but this fact bear in mind, we will follow the trail for fifteen days unless we catch them before that time expires, no matter how far it may take us from our base of supplies; we may not see the supply steamer again;" and, turning as he was about to enter his tent, he added, "You had better carry along an extra supply of salt; we may have to live on horse meat before we get through."

Frederic Remington



Cavalry officer in campaign outfit.

He was taken at his word, and an extra supply of salt was carried. "Battalion" and "wing" organizations were broken up, and troop commanders were responsible only to General Custer. His written instructions were as follows:

CAMP AT MOUTH OF ROSEBUD RIVER, MONTANA TERRITORY, JUNE 22d, 1876. LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CUSTER, 7th CAVALRY. COLONEL: The Brig.-General Commanding directs that, as soon as your regiment can be made ready for the march, you will proceed up the Rosebud in pursuit of the Indians whose trail was discovered by Major Reno a few days since. It is, of course, impossible to give you any definite instructions in regard to this movement, and were it not impossible to do so the Department Commander places too much confidence in your zeal, energy, and ability, to wish to impose upon you precise orders which might hamper your action when nearly in contact with the enemy. He will, however, indicate to you his own views of what your action should be, and he desires that you should conform to them unless you shall see sufficient reason for departing from them. He thinks that you should proceed up the Rosebud until you ascertain definitely the direction in which the trail above spoken of leads. Should it be found (as it appears almost certain that it will be found) to turn towards the Little Horn,

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he thinks that you should still proceed southward, perhaps as far as the headwaters of the Tongue, and then turn towards the Little Horn, feeling constantly, however, to your left, so as to preclude the possibility of the excape of the Indians to the south or southeast by passing around your left flank. The column of Colonel Gibbon is now in motion for the mouth of the Big Horn. As soon as it reaches that point it will cross the Yellowstone and move up at least as far as the forks of the Big and Little Horns. Of course its future movements must be controlled by circumstances as they arise, but it is hoped that the Indians, if upon the Little Horn, may be so nearly inclosed by the two columns that their escape will be impossible.

The Department Commander desires that on your way up the Rosebud you should thoroughly examine the upper part of Tulloch's Creek, and that you shouldendeavorto send a scout through to Colonel Gibbon's column, with information of the result of your examination. The lower part of this creek will be examined by a detachment from Colonel Gibbon's command. The supply steamer will be pushed up the Big Horn as far as the forks if the river is found to be navigable for that distance, and the Department Commander, who will accompany the column of Colonel Gibbon, desires you to report to him there not later than the expiration of the time for which your troops are rationed, unless in the mean time you receive further orders. Very respectfully, your obedient servant, E. W. Smith, Captain 18th Infantry, Acting Assistant Adjutant-General.

These instructions are explicit, and fixed the location of the Indians very accurately. Of course as soon as it was determined that we were to go out, nearly every one took time to write letters home,

Captain Tom Custer, Company C.

but I doubt very much if there were many of a cheerful nature. Some officers made their wills; others gave verbal instructions as to the disposition of personal property and distribution of mementos; they seemed to have a presentiment of their fate.

At twelve o'clock noon, on the 22nd of June, the "Forward" was sounded, and the regiment marched out of camp in column of fours, each troop followed by its pack-mules. Generals Terry, Gibbon, and Custer stationed themselves near our line of march and reviewed the regiment. General Terry had a pleasant word for each officer as he returned the salute.

Our pack-trains proved troublesome at the start, as the cargoes began falling off before we got out of camp, and during all that day the mules straggled badly. After that day, however, they were placed under the charge of an officer who was directed to report at the end of each day's march the order of merit of the efficiency of the troop packers.

Doubtless General Custer had some ulterior design in this. It is quite probable that if he had had occasion to detach troops requiring rapid marching, he would have selected those troops whose packers had the best records. At all events, the efficiency was much increased, and after we struck the Indian trail the pack-trains kept closed.

We went into camp about 4 p.m., having marched twelve miles. About sunset "officers' call" was sounded, and we assembled at General Custer's bivouac and squatted in groups about the General's bed. It was not a cheerful assemblage; everybody seemed to be in a serious mood, and the little conversation carried on, before all had arrived, was in undertones. When all had assembled the General said that until further orders trumpet-calls would not be sounded except in an emergency; the marches would begin at 5 a.m. sharp; the troop commanders were all experienced officers, and knew well enough what to do, and when to do what was necessary for their troops; there were two things that would be regulated from his headquarters, which were, when to move out of and when to go into camp.

All other details, such as reveille, stables, watering, halting, grazing, etc., on the march would be left to the judgment and discretion of the troop commanders; they were to keep within supporting distance of each other, not to get ahead of the scouts, or very far to the rear of the column. He took particular pains to impress upon the officers his reliance upon their judgment, discretion, and loyalty.

He thought, judging from the number of lodge-fires reported by Reno, that we might meet at least a thousand warriors; there might be enough young men from the agencies visiting their hostile

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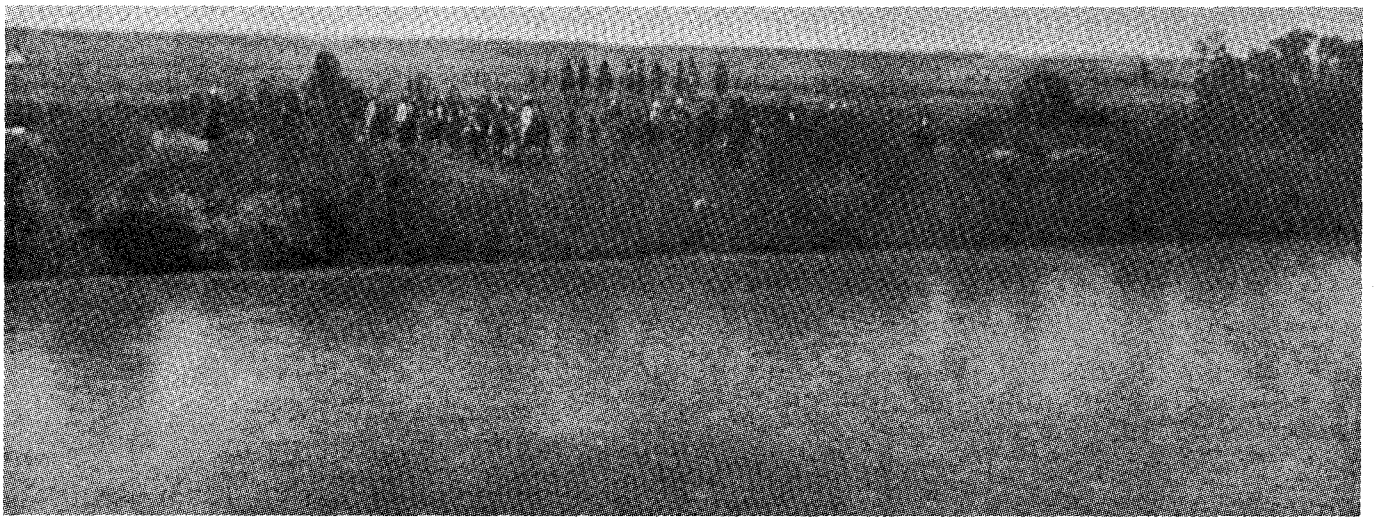

Major Marcus A. Reno's crossing, in retreat, showing the valley to the west.

friends to make a total of fifteen hundred. He had consulted the reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs as to the probable number of "Hostiles" (those who had persistently refused to live or enroll themselves at the Indian agencies), and he was confident, if any reliance was to be placed upon those reports, that there would not be an opposing force of more than fifteen hundred.

General Terry had offered him the additional force of the battalion of the 2nd Cavalry, but he had declined it because he felt sure that the 7th Cavalry could whip any force that would be able to combine against him; that if the regiment could not, no other regiment in the service could; if they could whip the regiment, they would be able to defeat a much larger force, or, in other words, the reinforcement of this battalion could not save us from defeat. With the regiment acting alone there would be harmony, but another organization would be sure to cause jealousy.

He had declined the offer of the Gatling guns for the reason that they might hamper our movements or march at a critical moment, because of the difficult nature of the country through which we would march. The marches would be from twenty-five to thirty miles a day. Troop officers were cautioned to husband their rations and the strength of their mules and horses, as we might be out for a great deal longer time than that for which we were rationed, as he intended to follow the trail until we could get the Indians, even if it took us to the Indian agencies on the Missouri River or in Nebraska. All officers were requested to make to him, then or at any time, any suggestions they thought fit.

This "talk" of his, as we called it, was considered at the time as something extraordinary for General Custer, for it was not his habit to unbosom himself to his officers. In it he showed a lack of self-confidence, a reliance on somebody else; there was an indefinable something that was not Custer. His manner and tone, usually brusque and aggressive, or somewhat rasping was on this occasion conciliating and subdued. There was something akin to an appeal, as if depressed, that made a deep impression on all present.

We compared watches to get the official time, and separated to attend to our various duties. Lieutenants McIntosh, Wallace, and myself walked to our bivouac for some distance in silence, when Wallace remarked: "Godfrey, I believe General Custer is going to be killed." "Why, Wallace," I replied, "what makes you think so?" "Because," said he, "I have never heard Custer talk in that way before."

I went to my troop and gave orders what time the "silent" reveille should be and resolved other such details for the morning preparations; also the following directions in case of a night attack: the stable guard, packers, and cooks were to go out at once to the horses and mules to quiet and guard them; the other men were to go at once to a designated rendezvous and await orders; no man should fire a shot until he received orders from an officer to do so.

When they retired for the night they should put their arms and equipments where they could get them without leaving their beds. I then went through the herd to satisfy myself as to the security of the animals. During the performance of this duty I came to the bivouac of the Indian scouts. "Mitch" Bouyer, the half-breed interpreter, "Bloody Knife," the chief of the Ree scouts, "Half-Yellow-Face," the chief of the Crow scouts, and others were having a "talk,"

I observed them for a few minutes, when Bouyer turned toward me, apparently at the suggestion of "Half-Yellow-Face," and said, "Have you ever fought against these Sioux?"

"Yes," I replied.

Then he asked, "Well, how many do you expect to find?"

I answered, "It is said we may find between one thousand and fifteen hundred."

"Well, do you think we can whip that many?"

"Oh, yes, I guess so."

After he had interpreted our conversation, he said to me with a good deal of emphasis, "Well, I can tell you we are going to have a —— big fight."

At five o'clock, sharp, on the morning of the 23rd, General Custer mounted and started up the Rosebud, followed by two sergeants, one carrying the regimental standard and the other his personal or headquarters flag, the same kind of flag as used while commanding his cavalry division during the Rebellion. This was the signal for the command to mount and take up the march.

Eight miles out we came to the first of the Indian camping-places. It certainly indicated a large village and numerous population. There were a great many "wicki-ups" (bushes stuck in the ground with the tops drawn together, over which they placed canvas or blankets). These we supposed at the time were for the dogs, but subsequent events developed the fact that they were the temporary shelters of the transients from the agencies.

During the day we passed through three of these camping-places and made halts at each one. Everybody was busy studying the age of pony droppings and tracks and lodge trails, and endeavoring to determine the number of lodges. These points were the all-absorbing topics of conversation. We went into camp about five o'clock, having marched about thirty-three miles.

June 24th we passed a great many camping-places, all appearing to be of nearly the same strength. One would naturally suppose these were the successive camping-places of the same village, when in fact they were the continuous camps of the several bands. The fact that they appeared to be of nearly the same age, that is, having been made at the same time, did not impress us then.

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We passed through one much larger than any of the others. The grass for a considerable distance around it had been cropped close, indicating that large herds had been grazed there. The frame of a large "Sun-dance" lodge was standing, and in it we found the scalp of a white man, probably one of General Gibbon's command who had been killed some weeks previously.

It was here that the Indians from the agencies had joined the Hostiles' camp. The command halted here and "officers' call" was sounded. Upon assembling we were informed that our Crow scouts, who had been very active and efficient, had discovered fresh signs, the tracks of three or four ponies and of one Indian on foot.

A stiff southerly wind blew up just as we were about to separate and the General's headquarters flag was blown down, falling toward our rear. Being near the flag, I picked it up and stuck the staff in the ground, but it fell again to the rear. I then bored the staff into the ground where it would have the support of a sage-bush. This circumstance made no impression on me at the time, but after the battle an officer asked me if I remembered the incident; he had observed it, and regarded the fact of its falling to the rear as a bad omen, and felt sure we would suffer a defeat.

The march during the day was tedious. We made many long halts so as not to get ahead of the scouts, who seemed to be doing their work thoroughly, giving special attention to the right, toward Tulloch's Creek, the valley of which was in general view from the divide. Once or twice signal smokes were reported in that direction. The weather was dry and had been for some time, consequently the trail was very dusty. The troops were required to march on separate trails so that the dust clouds would not rise so high.

The valley was heavily marked with lodge-pole trails and pony tracks, showing that immense herds of ponies had been driven over it. About sundown we went into camp under the cover of a bluff, so as to hide the command as much as possible. We had marched about twenty-eight miles. The fires were ordered to be put out as soon as supper was over, and we were to be in readiness to march again at 11:30 p.m.

Lieutenant Hare and myself lay down about 9:30 to take a nap; when comfortably fixed we heard some one say, "He's over there by that tree." As that described our locality pretty well, I called out to know what was wanted, and the reply came: "The General's compliments and wants to see all the officers at headquarters immediately."

So we gave up our much-needed rest and groped our way through horse herds, over sleeping men, and through thickets of bushes trying to find headquarters.

No one could tell us, and as all fires and lights were out we could not keep our bearings. We finally espied a solitary candle-light, toward which we traveled, and found most of the officers assembled at the General's bivouac.

The General said that the trail led over the divide to the Little Big Horn; the march would be taken up at once, as he was anxious to get as near the divide as possible before daylight, where the command would be concealed during the day. This would give us ample time for the country to be studied, to locate the village and to make plans for the attack on the 26th.

We then returned to our troops, except Lieutenant Hare, who was put on duty with the scouts. Because of the dust it was impossible to see any distance, and the rattle of equipments and clattering of the horses' feet made it difficult to hear distinctly beyond our immediate surroundings. We could not see the trail, and we could only follow it by keeping in the dust cloud.

The night was very calm, but occasionally a slight breeze would waft the cloud and disconcert our bearings; then we were obliged to halt to catch a sound from those in advance, sometimes whistling or hallooing, and getting a response we would start forward again. Finally troopers were put ahead, away from the noise of our column where they could hear the sounds of those in front. A little after 2 a.m., June 25, the command was halted to await further tidings from the scouts; we had marched about ten miles. Part of the command unsaddled to rest the horses. After daylight some coffee was made, but it was almost impossible to drink it; the water was so alkaline that the horses refused to drink.

Some time before eight o'clock, General Custer rode bareback to the several troops and gave orders to be ready to march at eight o'clock. He also gave information that scouts had discovered the locality of the Indian villages or camps in the valley of the Little Big Horn, about twelve or fifteen miles beyond the divide. Just before setting out on the march I went to where General Custer's bivouac was. The General, "Bloody Knife," and several Ree scouts and a half-breed interpreter were squatted in a circle having a "talk" after the Indian fashion.

The General wore a serious expression and was apparently abstracted. The scouts were doing the talking, and seemed nervous and disturbed. Finally "Bloody Knife" made a remark that recalled the General from his reverie, and he asked in his usual brusque manner, "What's that he says?" The interpreter replied, "He says we'll find enough Sioux to keep us fighting two or three days." The General smiled and remarked, "I guess we'll get through with them in one day." ●

The conclusion of "Custer's Last Battle" follows in September *The West.*

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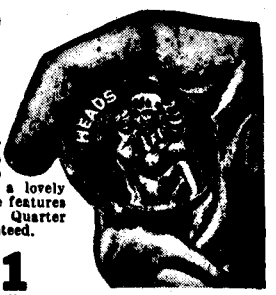

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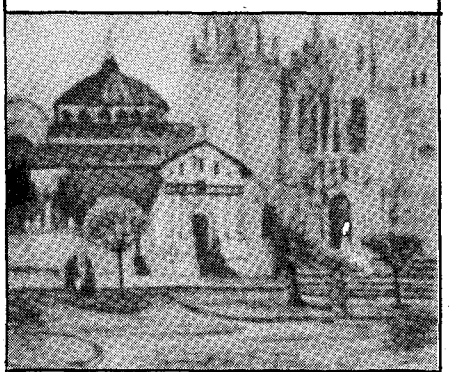

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(Continued from page 32)

merchandise, and went out as a New Mexican trader to Santa Fe. Having been unsuccessful at Santa Fe, he returned to St. Louis, joined a party of trappers, went to the Rocky Mountains, and found his way down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver. There he formed plans for trying to get down to the coast of California to establish a colony.

He took a vessel that went to the Sandwich Islands, and there communicated his plans to people who assisted him. But as there was no vessel going direct from the Sandwich Islands to California, he had to take a Russian vessel by way of Sitka. He got such credit and help as he could in the Sandwich Islands and induced five or six natives to accompany him to start the contemplated colony. He expected to send to Europe and the United States for his colonists.

When he came to the coast of California, in 1840, he had an interview with the governor, Alvarado, and obtained permission to explore the country and find a place for his colony. He came to the bay of San Francisco, procured a small boat and explored the largest river he could find, and selected the site where the city of Sacramento now stands.

A short time before we arrived Sutter had bought out the Russian-American Fur Company at Fort Ross and Bodega on the Pacific. That company had a charter from Spain to take furs, but had no right to the land. The charter had about expired.

Against the protest of the California authorities they had extended their settlement southward some twenty miles farther than they had any right to, and had occupied the country to, and even beyond, the bay of Bodega. The time came when the taking of furs was no longer profitable; the Russians were ordered to vacate and return to Sitka.

They wished to sell all their personal property and whatever remaining right they had to the land. So Sutter bought them out—cattle and horses; a little vessel of about twenty-five tons burden, called a launch; and other property, including forty odd pieces of old rusty cannon and one or two small brass pieces, with a quantity of old French flint-lock muskets pronounced by Sutter to be of those lost by Bonaparte in 1812 in his disastrous retreat from Moscow.

This ordnance Sutter conveyed up the Sacramento River on the launch to his colony. As soon as the native Californians heard that he had bought out the Russians and was beginning to fortify himself by taking up the cannon they began to fear him. They were doubtless concerned because Americans and other foreigners had already commenced to make the place their headquarters, and they foresaw that Sutter's fort would be for them, especially for Americans, what it naturally did become in fact, a place of protection and general rendezvous; and so they threatened to break it up.

Gen. M.G. Vallejo, military commander under Governor Alvarado.

Sutter had not as yet actually received his grant; he had simply taken preliminary steps and had obtained permission to settle and proceed to colonize. These threats were made before he had begun the fort, much less built it, and Sutter felt insecure. He had a good many Indians whom he had collected about him, and a few white men (perhaps fifteen or twenty) and some Sandwich Islanders. When he heard of the coming of our thirty men he inferred at once that we would soon reach him and be an additional protection.

With this feeling of security, even before the arrival of our party Sutter was so indiscreet as to write a letter to the governor or to some one in authority, saying that he wanted to hear no more threats of dispossession, *for he was now able not only to defend himself but to go and chastise them.*

That letter having been despatched to the city of Mexico, the authorities there sent a new governor in 1842 with about six hundred troops to subdue Sutter.

But the new governor, Manuel Micheltorena, was an intelligent man. He knew the history of California and was aware that nearly all of his predecessors had been expelled by insurrections of the native Californians. Sutter sent a courier to meet the governor before his arrival at Los Angeles, with a letter in French, conveying his greetings to the governor, expressing a most cordial welcome, and submitting cheerfully and entirely to his authority.

In this way the governor and Sutter became fast friends, and through Sutter the Americans had a friend in Governor Micheltorena.

The first employment I had in California was in Sutter's service, about two months after our arrival at Marsh's. He engaged me to go to Bodega and Fort Ross and to stay there until he could finish removing the property which he had bought from the Russians. I remained

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there fourteen months, until everything was removed; then I came up into Sacramento Valley and took charge for Sutter of his Hock farm (so named from a large Indian village on the place), remaining there a little more than a year—in 1843 and part of 1844.

Nearly everybody who came to California made it a point to reach Sutter's Fort. Sutter was one of the most liberal and hospitable of men. Everybody was welcome—one man or a hundred, it was all the same. He had peculiar traits: his necessities compelled him to take all he could buy, and he paid all he could pay; but he failed to keep up with his payments. And so he soon found himself immensely—almost hopelessly—involved in debt.

His debt to the Russians amounted at first to something near one hundred thousand dollars. Interest increased apace. He had agreed to pay in wheat, but his crops failed. He struggled in every way, sowing large areas to wheat, increasing his cattle and horses, and trying to build a flouring mill.

He kept his launch running to and from the bay, carrying down hides, tallow, furs, wheat, etc., returning with lumber sawed by hand in the redwood groves nearest the bay and other supplies.

On an average it took a month to make a trip. The fare for each person was five dollars, including board. Sutter started many other new enterprises in order to find relief from his embarrassments; but, in spite of all he could do, these increased.

Every year found him worse and worse off but it was partly his own fault. He employed men—not because he always needed and could profitably employ them, but because in the kindness of his heart it simply became a habit to employ everybody who wanted employment.

As long as he had anything he trusted any one with everything he wanted—responsible or otherwise, acquaintances and strangers alike. Most of the labor was done by Indians, chiefly wild ones, except a few from the Missions who spoke Spanish. The wild ones learned Spanish so far as they learned anything, that being the language of the country, and everybody had to learn something of it.

The number of men employed by Sutter may be stated at from 100 to 500—the latter number at harvest time. Among them were blacksmiths, carpenters, tanners, gun-smiths, vaqueros, farmers, gardeners, weavers—to weave coarse woolen blankets—hunters, sawyers—to saw lumber by hand, a custom known in England—sheep-herders, trappers, and, later, millwrights and a distiller. In a word, Sutter started every business and enterprise possible.

He tried to maintain a sort of military discipline. Cannon were mounted and pointed in every direction through embrasures in the walls and bastions. The soldiers were Indians, and every evening after coming from work they were drilled under a white officer, generally a German, marching to the music of fife and drum. A sentry was always at the gate, and regular bells called men to and from work.

Harvesting, with the rude implements, was a scene. Imagine three or four hundred wild Indians in a grain field, armed, some with sickles, some with butcher-knives, some with pieces of hoop iron roughly fashioned into shapes like sickles. but many having only their hands with which to gather by small handsful the dry and brittle grain; and as their hands would soon become sore, they resorted to dry willow sticks, which were split to afford a sharper edge with which to sever the straw.

But the wildest part was the threshing. The harvest of weeks, sometimes of a month, was piled up in the straw in the form of a huge mound in the middle of a high, strong, round corral; then three or four hundred wild horses were turned in to thresh it, the Indians whooping to make them run faster. Suddenly they would dash in front of the horse-band at full speed, when the motion became reversed, with the effect of plowing up the trampled straw to the very bottom. In an hour the grain would be thoroughly threshed and the dry straw broken almost into chaff.

In this manner I have seen two thousand bushels of wheat threshed in a single hour.

Next came the winnowing, which would often take another month. It could only be done when the wind was blowing, by throwing high into the air shovelsful of grain, straw, and chaff, the lighter materials being wafted to one side, while the grain, comparatively clean, would descend and form a heap by itself.

In this manner all the grain in California was cleaned. At that day no such thing as a fanning mill had ever been brought to this coast.

The kindness and hospitality of the native Californians have not been overstated. Up to the time the Mexican regime ceased in California they had a custom of never charging for anything; that is to say, for entertainment, food, use of horses, etc. You were supposed, even if invited to visit a friend, to bring your blankets with you, and one would be very thoughtless if he traveled and did not take a knife with him to cut his meat. When you had eaten, the invariable custom was to rise, deliver to the woman or hostess the plate on which you had eaten the meat and beans—for that was about all they had—and say, "*Muchas gracias, Senora*" ("Many thanks, madame"); and the hostess as invariably replied, "*Buen provecho*" ("May it do you much good").

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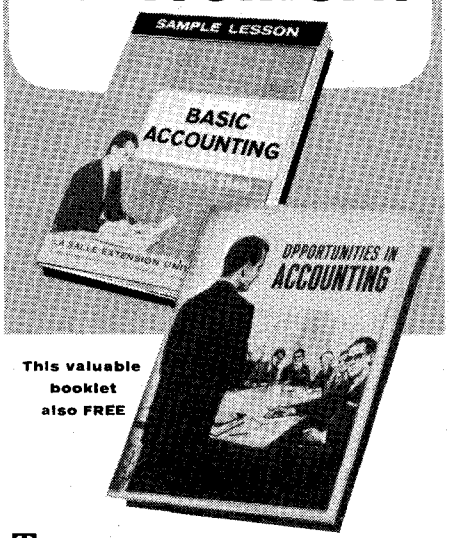

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had gardens with grapes, olives, figs, pomegranates, pears, and apples, but the ranches scarcely ever had any fruit.

With the exception of the tuna, or prickly pear, these were the only cultivated fruits I can recall to mind in California, except oranges, lemons, and limes, in a few places.

When you wanted a horse to ride, you would take it to the next ranch—it might be twenty, thirty, or fifty miles—and turn it out there, and sometime or other in reclaiming his stock the owner would get it back. In this way you might travel from one end of California to the other.

The ranch life was not confined to the country, it prevailed in the towns too. There was not a hotel in San Francisco, or Monterey, or anywhere in California, till 1846, when the Americans took the country.

The priests at the Missions were glad to entertain strangers without charge. They would give you a room in which to sleep, and perhaps a bedstead with a hide stretched across it, and over that you would spread your blankets.

At this time there was not in California any vehicle except a rude California cart; the wheels were without tires, and were made by felling an oak tree and hewing it down till it made a solid wheel nearly a foot thick on the rim and a little larger where the axle went through. The hole for the axle would be eight or nine inches in diameter, but a few years' use would increase it to a foot. To make the hole, an auger, gouge, or chisel was sometimes used, but the principal tool was an ax. A small tree required but little hewing and shaping to answer for an axle.

These carts were always drawn by oxen, the yoke being lashed with rawhide to the horns. To lubricate the axles they used soap (that is one thing the Mexicans could make), carrying along for the purpose a big pail of thick soapsuds which was constantly put in the box or hole; but you could generally tell when a California cart was coming half a mile away by the squeaking.

I have seen the families of the wealthiest people go long distances at the rate of thirty miles or more a day, visiting in one of these clumsy two-wheeled vehicles. They had a little framework around it made of round sticks, and a bullock hide was put in for a floor or bottom. Sometimes the better class would have a little calico for curtains and cover. There was no such thing as a spoked wheel in use then.

Somebody sent from Boston a wagon as a present to the priest in charge of the Mission of San Jose, but as soon as summer came the woodwork shrunk, the tires came off, and it all fell to pieces. There was no one in California to set tires. When Governor Micheltorena was sent from Mexico to California he brought with him an ambulance, not much better than a common spring wagon, such as a marketman would now use with one horse. It had shafts, but in California at that time there was no horse broken to work in them, nor was there such a thing known as a harness; so the governor had two mounted vaqueros to pull it, their reatas being fastened to the shafts and to the pommels of their saddles.

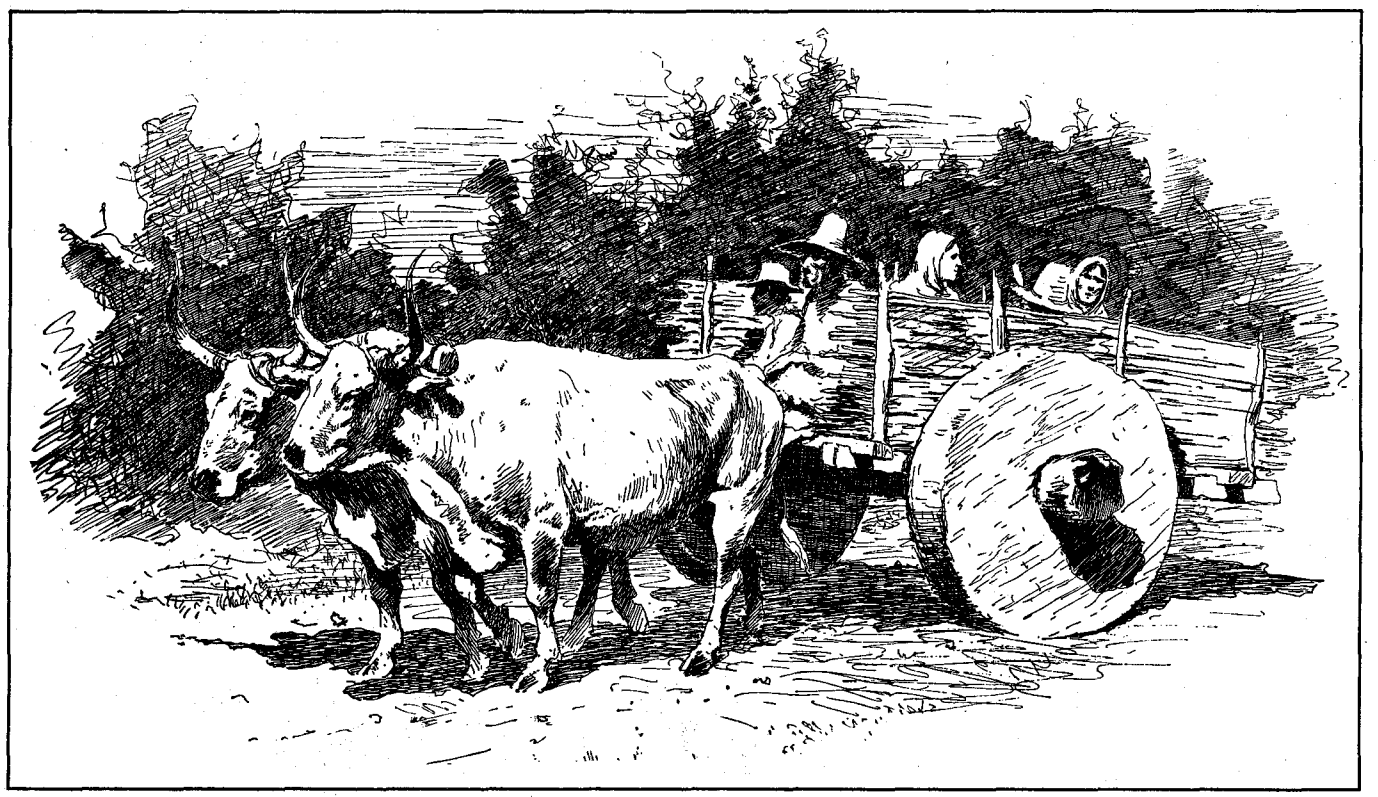
The first wagons brought into California came across the plains in 1844 with the Townsend or Stevens party. They were left in the mountains and lay buried under the snow till the following spring, when Moses Schallenberger, Elisha Stevens (who was the captain of the party), and others went up and brought some of the wagons down into the Sacramento Valley. No other wagons had ever before reached California across the plains.

Elisha Stevens was from Georgia and had there worked in the gold mines. He started across the plains with the express purpose of finding gold. When he got into the Rocky Mountains, as I was told by his friend Dr. Townsend, Stevens said, "We are in a gold country."

One evening (when they camped for the night) he went into a gulch, took some gravel and washed it and got the color of gold, thus unmistakably showing, as he afterwards did in Lower California, that he had considerable knowledge of gold mining.

But the strange thing is that afterwards, when he passed up and down several times over the country between Bear and Yuba rivers, as he did with the party in the spring of 1845 to bring down their wagons, he should have seen no signs of gold where subsequently the whole country was found to contain it.

The early foreign residents of California were largely runaway sailors. Many if not most would change their names.



A California cart in the early days before the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill.

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For instance, Gilroy's ranch, where the town of Gilroy is now located, was owned by an old resident under the assumed name of Gilroy.

Of course vessels touching upon this coast were liable, as they were everywhere, to lose men by desertion, especially if the men were maltreated. Such things have been so common that it is not difficult to believe that those who left their vessels in early days on this then distant coast had cause for so doing.

To be known as a runaway sailor was no stain upon a man's character. It was no uncommon thing, after my arrival here, for sailors to be skulking and hiding about from ranch to ranch till the vessel they had left should leave the coast.

At Amador's ranch, on my first arrival here, I met a sailor boy named Harrison Pierce, of eighteen or twenty years, who was concealing himself till his vessel should go to sea. He managed to escape recapture and so remained in the country. He was one of the men who went with me from Marsh's ranch to Sutter's.

Californians would catch and return sailors to get the reward which, I believe, captains of vessels invariably offered. After the vessels had sailed and there was no chance of the reward the native Californians gave the fugitives no further trouble.

At that time the only trade, foreign or domestic, was in hides, tallow, and furs; but mostly hides. With few exceptions the vessels that visited the coast were from Boston, fitted out by Hooper to go there and trade for hides.

Occasionally vessels would put in for water or in distress. San Francisco was the principal harbor; the next was Monterey. There was an anchorage off San Luis Obispo; the next was Santa Barbara, the next San Buenaventura, then San Pedro, and lastly San Diego. (See map.)

The hides were generally collected and brought to San Diego and there salted, staked out to dry, and folded so that they would lie compactly in the ship, and thence were shipped to Boston. Goods were principally sold on board the vessels as there were very few stores on land. That of Thomas O. Larkin at Monterey was the principal one.

The entrance of a vessel into harbor or roadstead was a signal to all the ranchers to come in their little boats and launches laden with hides to trade for goods. Thus vessels went from port to port, remaining a few or many days according to the amount of trade.

I have said that there was no regular physician in California. Later, in 1843, in a company that came from Oregon, was one Joe Meeks, a noted character in the Rocky Mountains. On the way he said, "Boys, when I get down to California among the Mexicans I am going to palm myself off as a doctor"; and from that time they dubbed him Dr. Meeks.

He could neither read nor write. As soon as the Californians heard of his arrival at Monterey they began to come to him with their different ailments.

His first professional service was to a boy who had a toe cut off. Meeks, happening to be near, stuck the toe on, binding it in a poultice of mud, and it grew on again. The new governor, Micheltorena, employed him as surgeon. Meeks had a way of looking and acting very wise, and of being reticent when people talked about things which he did not understand.

One day he went into a little shop kept by a man known as Dr. Stokes, who had been a kind of hospital steward on board ship. He had brought ashore one of those little medicine chests that were usually taken to sea, with apothecary scales and a pamphlet giving a short synopsis of diseases and a table of weights and medicines.

Meeks went to him and said, "Doctor, I want you to put me up some powders." So Stokes went behind his table and got out his scales and medicines and asked, "What kind of powders?" "Just common powders—patient is not very sick." "If you will tell me what kind of powders, Dr. Meeks—" "Oh, just common powders."

That is all he would say. Dr. Stokes told it about town that Meeks knew nothing about medicine, but people thought that perhaps Meeks had given the prescription in Latin and that Dr. Stokes could not read it. But Meeks's reign was to have an end.

An American man-of-war came into the harbor. Thomas O. Larkin was the United States consul at Monterey, and the commander and all his officers went up to Larkin's store, among them the surgeon, who was introduced to Dr. Meeks. The conversation turning upon the diseases incident to the country, Meeks became reticent, saying merely that he was going out of practice and intended to leave the country, because he could not get medicines.

The surgeon expressed much sympathy and said, "Dr. Meeks, if you will make me out a list I will very cheerfully divide with you such medicines as I can spare."

Meeks did not know the names of three kinds of medicine, and tried evasion, but the surgeon cornered him and put the question so direct that he had to answer. He asked him what medicine he needed most. Finally Meeks said he wanted some "draps," and that was all that could be got out of him.

When the story came out his career as a doctor was at an end, and he soon after left the country.

In 1841 there was likewise no lawyer in California. In 1843 a lawyer named Hastings arrived *via* Oregon. He was an ambitious man, and desired to wrest the country from Mexico and make it a republic. He disclosed his plan to a man who revealed it to me. His scheme was to go down to Mexico and make friends of the Mexican authorities. If possible he would

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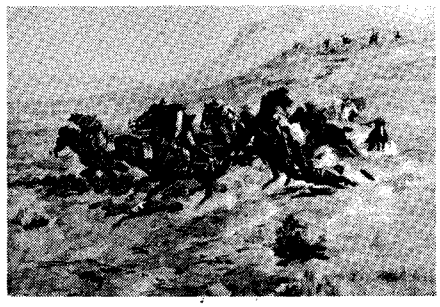

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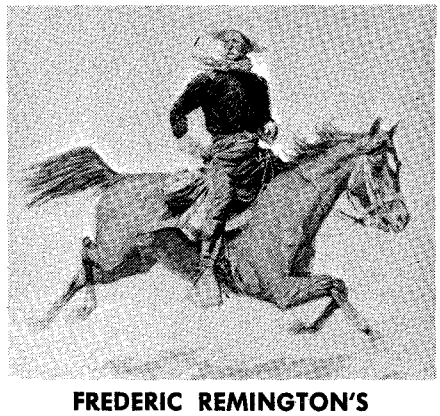

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Canyon of the American River.

inveigle a grant of land, and then go into Texas, where he would consult President Houston. He would then go East and write a book, praising the country to the skies—which he did, with little regard to accuracy.

His object was to start a large immigration, and in this he succeeded. The book was published in 1845, and undoubtedly largely induced what was called the "great immigration" of 1846 across the plains, consisting of about six hundred.

Hastings returned to California in the autumn of 1845, preparatory to taking steps to declare the country independent and to establish a republic and make himself president.

In 1846 he went back to meet the immigration and to perfect his plans so that the emigrants would know exactly where to go and what to do. But in 1846 the Mexican war intervened, and while Hastings was gone to meet the immigration California was taken possession of by the United States.

These doubtless were the first plans ever conceived for the independence of California. Hastings knew there were not enough Americans and foreigners yet in California to do anything. He labored hard to get money to publish his book, and went about lecturing on temperance in Ohio, where he became intimate with a fellow by the name of McDonald, who was masquerading as a Methodist preacher and attempting, with considerable success, to raise funds for missionary purposes.

At last they separated, McDonald preceding Hastings to San Francisco, where he became bartender for a man named Vioget, who owned a saloon and a billiard table—the first, I think, on the Pacific coast.

Hastings returned later, and, reaching San Francisco in a cold rain, went up to Vioget's and called for brandy. He poured out a glassful and was about to drink it, when McDonald, recognizing him, leaned over the bar, extended his hand, and said,

On the summit of the Sierra.

"My good temperance friend, how are you?" Hastings in great surprise looked him in the eyes, recognized him, and said, "My dear Methodist brother, how do you do?"

It is not generally known that in 1841—the year I reached California—gold was discovered in what is now a part of Los Angeles County. The yield was not rich; indeed, it was so small that it made no stir.

The discoverer was an old Canadian Frenchman by the name of Baptiste Ruelle, who had been a trapper with the Hudson Bay Company and, as was not infrequently the case with these men, had drifted down into New Mexico, where he had worked in placer mines.

The mines discovered by Ruelle in California attracted a few New Mexicans, by whom they were worked for several years. But as they proved too poor, Ruelle himself came up into the Sacramento Valley, five hundred miles away, and engaged to work for Sutter when I too, was engaged in various activities for him.

New Mexican miners usually carried their gold (made up of small nuggets, and small in quantity as well) in a large quill, that of a vulture or turkey buzzard.

Sometimes these quills would hold three or four ounces, and, being translucent, they were graduated so as to see at any time the quantity in them. The gold was kept in by a stopper. Ruelle had such a quill, which appeared to have been carried for years.

Now it so happened that almost every year a party of a dozen men or more would come from or return to Oregon. Of such parties some, perhaps most of them, would be Canadian French, who had trapped all over the country, and these were generally the guides.

In 1843 it was known to every one that such a party was getting ready to go to Oregon.

Baptiste Ruelle had been in Sutter's employ several months, when one day he came to Sutter, showed him a few small particles of gold, and said he had found them on the American River, and he wanted to go far into the mountains on that stream to prospect for gold.

For this purpose he desired two mules loaded with provisions, and he selected two notedly stupid Indian boys whom he wanted to go into the mountains with him, saying he would have no others.

Of course he did not get the outfit. Sutter and I talked about it and wondered what he wanted with so much provision—the American River being only a mile and the mountains only twenty miles distant. And why did he choose those two stupid boys, since he might be attacked by the Indians? Our conclusion was that he really wanted the outfit so that he could join the party and go to Oregon and remain. Such I believe was Ruelle's intention; though in 1848, after James W. Marshall had discovered the gold at Coloma, Ruelle, who was one of the first to go there and mine, still protested that he had discovered gold on the American River in 1843.

The only thing that I can recall to lend the least plausibility to Ruelle's pretensions would be that, so far as I know, he never, after that one time, manifested any desire to go to Oregon, and remained in California till he died. But I should add, neither did he ever show any longing again to go into the mountains to look for gold during the subsequent years he remained with Sutter, even to the time of Marshall's discovery.

Early in the spring of 1844, a Mexican working under me at the Hock Farm for Sutter came to me and told me there was gold in the Sierra Nevada. His name was Pablo Gutierrez. The discovery by Marshall, it will be remembered, was in January, 1848. Pablo told me this at a time when I was calling him to account because he had absented himself the day before without permission. I was giving

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him a lecture in Spanish, which I could speak quite well in those days.

Like many Mexicans, he had an Indian wife; some time before, he had been in the mountains and had bought a squaw. She had run away from him, and he had gone to find and bring her back. And it was while he was on this trip, he said, that he had seen signs of gold. After my lecture he said, "Senor, I have made an important discovery; there surely is gold on Bear River in the mountains."

This was in March, 1844. A few days afterward I arranged to go with him up on Bear River. We went five or six miles into the mountains, when he showed me the signs and the place where he thought the gold was. "Well," I said, "can you not find some?" No, he said, because he must have a *batea.*

He talked so much about the *"batea"* that I concluded it must be a complicated machine. "Can't Mr. Keiser, our saddletree maker, make the batea?" I asked.

"Oh, no."

I did not know then that a *batea* is nothing more or less than a wooden bowl which the Mexicans use for washing gold.

I said, "Pablo, where can you get it?" He said, "Down in Mexico." I said, "I will help pay your expenses if you will go down and get one," which he promised to do. I cautioned him, "Pablo, say nothing to anybody else about this gold discovery and we will get the *batea* and find the gold."

As time passed I was afraid to let him go to Mexico, lest when he got among his relatives he might be induced to stay and not come back, so I made a suggestion to him. I said, "Pablo, let us save our earnings and get on a vessel and go around to Boston, and there get the *batea*; I can interpret for you, and the Yankees are very ingenious and can make anything."

The idea pleased him, and he promised to go as soon as we could save enough to pay our expenses. He was to keep it a secret, and I believe he faithfully kept his promise. It would have taken us a year or two to get money enough to go.

In those days there were every year four or five arrivals, sometimes six, of vessels laden with goods from Boston to trade for hides in California. These vessels brought around all classes of goods needed by the Mexican people. It would have required about six months each way, five months being a quick passage.

But, as will be seen, our plans were interrupted. In the autumn of that year, 1844, a revolt took place. The native chiefs of California, Jose Castro and ex-Governor Alvarado, succeeded in raising an insurrection against the Mexican governor, Micheltorena, to expel him from the country. They accused him of being friendly to Americans and of giving them too much land. The truth was, he had simply shown impartiality.

When Americans had been here long enough, had conducted themselves properly, and had complied with the colonization laws of Mexico, he had given them lands as readily as to native-born citizens. He was a fair-minded man and an intelligent and good governor, and wished to develop the country.

His friendship for Americans was a mere pretext, for his predecessor, Alvarado, and his successor, Pio Pico, also granted lands freely to foreigners, and among them to Americans. The real cause of the insurrection against Micheltorena was that the native chiefs had become hungry to get hold again of the revenues.

The feeling against Americans was easily aroused and became their main excuse. The English and French influence, so far as felt, evidently leaned towards the side of the Californians. It was not open but it was felt, and not a few expressed the hope that England or France would some day seize and hold California.

I believe the *Gachupines*—natives of Spain, of whom there were a few—did not

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A Spanish-Californian senorita typical of the 1800's.

participate in the feeling against the Americans, though few did much, if anything, to allay it. In October Sutter went from Sacramento to Monterey, the capital, to see the governor and I went with him. Stopping at San Jose, we heard the first mutterings of the insurrection.

We hastened to Monterey, and were the first to communicate the fact to the governor. Sutter, alarmed, took the first opportunity to get away by water. There were in those days no mail routes, no public conveyances of any kind, no regular line of travel, no public highways. But a vessel happened to touch at Monterey, and Sutter took passage to the bay of San Francisco, and thence by his own launch reached home.

In a few days the first blow was struck, the insurgents taking all the horses belonging to the government at Monterey, setting the governor and all his troops on foot. However, I understood that a sort of parley took place at or near San Jose, but no battle, surrender, or settlement.

Meanwhile, having started to return by land to Sutter's Fort, two hundred miles distant, I met the governor returning to Monterey. He stopped his forces and talked with me half an hour and confided to me his plans. He desired me to beg the Americans to be loyal to Mexico; to assure them that he was their friend, and in due time would give them all the lands to which they were entitled.

He sent particularly friendly word to Sutter. Then I went on to the Mission of San Jose and there fell in with the insurgents, who had made that place their headquarters; I stayed all night, and the leaders, Castro and Alvarado, treated me like a prince. The two insurgents protested their friendship for the Americans, and sent a request to Sutter to support them. On my arrival at the fort the situation was fully considered, and all, with a single exception, concluded to support Micheltorena.

He had been our friend; he had granted us land; he promised, and we felt that we could rely upon his continued friendship. We felt, indeed we knew, we could not repose the same confidence in the native Californians. This man Pablo Gutierrez, who had told me about the gold in the Sierra Nevada, was a native of Sinaloa in Mexico and sympathized with the Mexi-

The anchorage of the port of Monterey looking toward the Pacific from the old burial ground.

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can governor and with us. Sutter sent him with dispatches to the governor, stating that we were organizing and preparing to join him. Pablo returned, and was sent again to tell the governor that we were on the march to join him at Monterey. This time he was taken prisoner with our dispatches and was hanged, somewhere near the present town of Gilroy.

That of course put an end to our gold discovery; otherwise Pablo Gutierrez might have been the discoverer instead of Marshall.

The insurrection ended in the capitulation—I might call it expulsion—of Micheltorena. The causes which led to this result were various, some of them infamous. Pio Pico, being the oldest member of the Departmental Assembly, became governor, and Castro commander-in-chief of the military. They reigned but one year, and then came the Mexican war. Castro was made governor of Lower California, and died there.

But I still had it in my mind to try to find gold, so early in the spring of 1845 I made it a point to visit the mines in the south discovered by Ruelle in 1841. They were in the mountains about twenty miles north or northeast of the Mission of San Fernando, or say fifty miles from Los Angeles. I wanted to see the Mexicans working there, and to gain what knowledge I could of gold digging. Dr. John Townsend went with me.

Pablo's confidence that there was gold on Bear River was fresh in my mind, and I hoped the same year to find time to return there and explore, and if possible find gold in the Sierra Nevada.

But I had no time that busy year to carry out my purpose. The Mexican's slow and inefficient manner of working the mine was most discouraging. When I returned to Sutter's Fort the same spring Sutter wanted me to stay with him for a year as bookkeeper, which meant his general business man as well. His financial matters being in a bad way, I consented.

I had a great deal to do besides keeping the books. Among other undertakings we sent men southeast in the Sierra Nevada about forty miles from the fort to saw lumber with a whipsaw. Two men would saw about one hundred or one hundred and twenty-five feet of good lumber a day. Early in July I framed an excuse to go into the mountains to give the men some special directions about lumber needed at the fort.

The day was one of the hottest I had ever experienced. No place looked favorable for a gold discovery. I even attempted to descend into a deep gorge through which meandered a small stream, but gave it up on account of the brush and the heat. My search was fruitless.

The place where Marshall discovered gold in 1848 was about forty miles to the north of the saw-pits at this place. The next spring, 1849, I joined a party to go to the mines on and south of the Cosumne and Mokelumne rivers. The first day we reached a trading post—Digg's, I think, was the name. Several traders had there pitched their tents to sell goods. One of them was Tom Fallon, whom I knew.

This post was within a few miles of where Sutter's men sawed the lumber in 1845. I asked Fallon if he had ever seen the old saw-pits where Sicard and Dupas had worked in 1845. He said he had, and knew the place well. Then I told him how I had attempted that year to descend into the deep gorge to the south of it to look for gold.

"My stars!" he said. "Why, that gulch down there was one of the richest placers that have ever been found in this country"; and he told me of men who had taken out a pint cupful of nuggets before breakfast.

Fremont's first visit to California was in the month of March, 1844. He came *via* eastern Oregon, traveling south and passing east of the Sierra Nevada, and crossed the chain about opposite the bay of San Francisco at the head of the American River, and descended into the Sacramento Valley to Sutter's Fort. It was there I first met him.

He stayed but a short time, three or four weeks perhaps, to refit with fresh mules and horses and such provisions as he could obtain, and then set out on his return to the United States. Coloma, where Marshall afterward discovered gold, was on one of the branches of the American River. Fremont probably came down that very stream.

How strange that he and his scientific corps did not discover signs of gold, as Commodore Wilkes's party had done when coming overland from Oregon in 1841. One morning at the breakfast table at Sutter's, Fremont was urged to remain a while and go to the coast, and among other things which it would be of interest for him to see was mentioned a very large redwood tree *(Sequoia sempervirens)* near Santa Cruz, or rather a cluster of trees, forming apparently a single trunk, which was said to be seventy-two feet in circumference. I then told Fremont of the big tree I had seen in the Sierra Nevada in October, 1841, which I afterwards verified to be one of the fallen big trees of the Calaveras Grove. I therefore believe myself to have been the first white man to see the mammoth trees of California.

The Sequoias are found nowhere except in California. The redwood that I speak of is the *Sequoia sempervirens,* and is confined to the sea-coast and the

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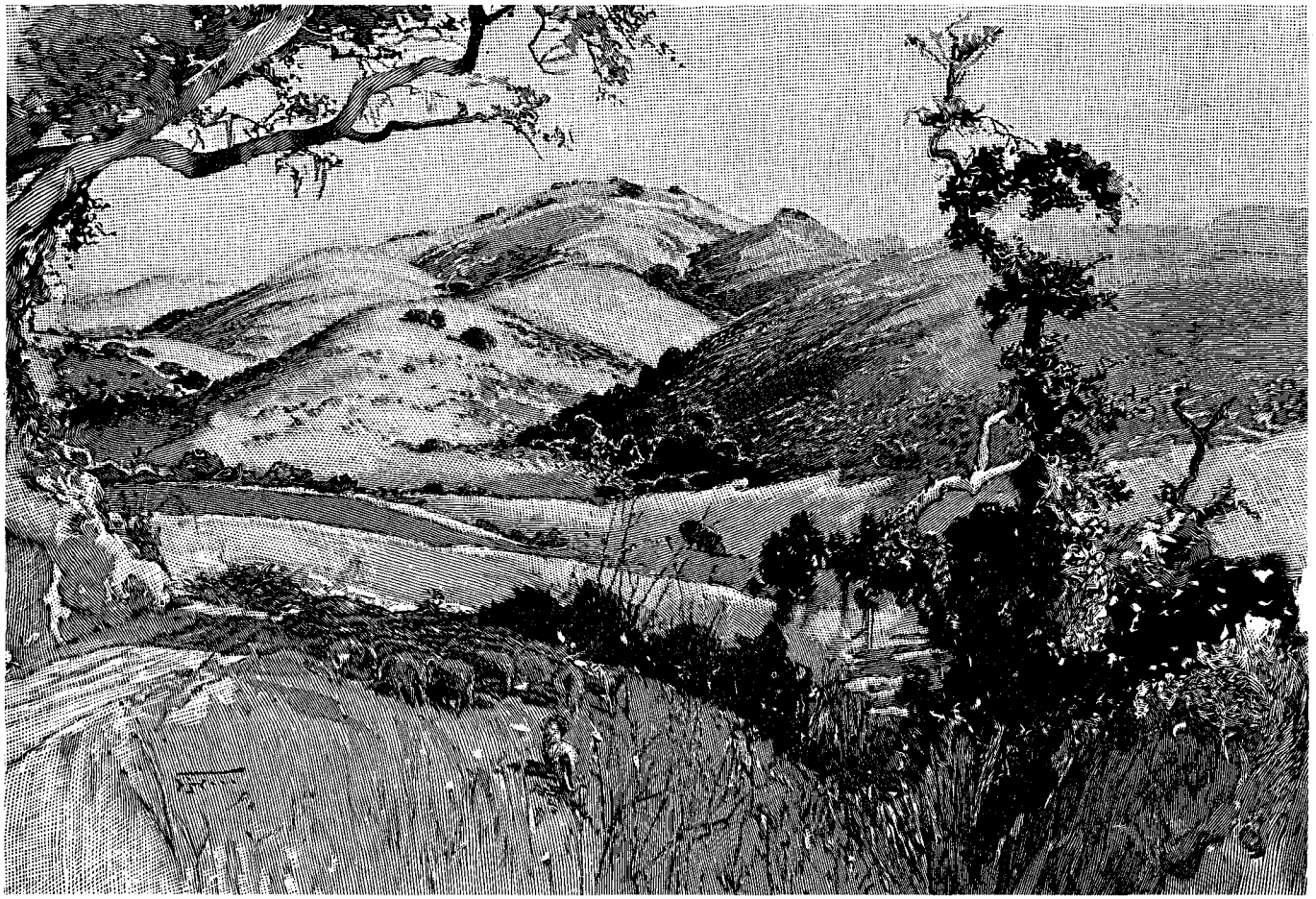

View of California's coastal range in the days before the Pacific Coast area was taken over by Americans.

west side of the Coast Range Mountains. The *Sequoia gigantea,* or mammoth tree, is found only on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada—nowhere farther north than latitude 38 degrees 30 minutes.

Sutter's Fort was an important point from the very beginning of the colony. The building of the fort and all subsequent immigrations added to its importance, for that was the first point of destination to those who came by way of Oregon or direct across the plains.

The fort was begun in 1842 and finished in 1844. There was no town till after the gold discovery in 1848, when it became the bustling, buzzing center for merchants, traders, miners, etc., and every available room was in demand.

In 1849 Sacramento City was laid out on the river two miles west of the fort, and the town grew up there at once into a city. The first town was planned by Hastings and myself in the month of January, 1846, about three or four miles below the mouth of the American River, and called Sutterville. But first the Mexican war, then the lull which always follows excitement, and then the rush and roar of the gold discovery, prevented its building up till it was too late. Attempts were several times made to revive Sutterville, but Sacramento City had become too strong to be removed. Sutter always called his colony and fort "New Helvetia," in spite of which the name mostly used by others, before the Mexican war, was Sutter's Fort, or Sacramento, and later Sacramento altogether.

Sutter's many enterprises continued to create a growing demand for lumber. Every year, and sometimes more than once, he sent parties into the mountains to explore for an available site to build a sawmill on the Sacramento River or some of its tributaries, by which the lumber could be rafted down to the fort. There was no want of timber or of water power in the mountains, but the canyon features of the streams rendered rafting impracticable.

The year after the war (1847) Sutter's need for lumber was even greater than ever, although his embarrassments had increased and his ability to undertake new enterprises became less and less. Yet, never discouraged, nothing daunted, another hunt must be made for a sawmill site. This time Marshall happened to be the man chosen by Sutter to search the mountains. He was gone about a month, and returned with a most favorable report.

James W. Marshall went across the plains to Oregon in 1844, and thence came to California the following year. He was a wheelwright by trade, but, being very ingenious, he could turn his hand to almost anything. So he acted as carpenter for Sutter, and did many other things, among which I may mention making wheels for spinning wool, and looms, reeds, and shuttles for weaving yarn into coarse blankets for the Indians, who did the carding, spinning, weaving, and all other labor.

In 1846 Marshall went through the war to its close as a private. Besides his ingenuity as a mechanic, he had most singular traits. Almost every one pronounced him half crazy or harebrained. He was certainly eccentric, and perhaps somewhat flighty.

His insanity, however, if he had any, was of a harmless kind; he was neither vicious nor quarrelsome. He had great, almost overweening confidence in his ability to do anything as a mechanic. I wrote the contract between Sutter and him to build the mill. Sutter was to furnish the means; Marshall was to build and run the mill, and have a share of the lumber for his compensation.

His idea was to haul the lumber part way and raft it down the American River to Sacramento, and thence, his part of it, down the Sacramento River, and through Suisun and San Pablo bays to San Francisco for a market.

Marshall's mind, in some respects at least, must have been unbalanced. It is hard to conceive how any sane man could have been so wide of the mark, or how any one could have selected such a site

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for a sawmill under the circumstances. Surely no other man than Marshall ever entertained so wild a scheme as that of rafting sawed lumber down the canyons of the American River, and no other man than Sutter would have been so confiding and credulous as to patronize him.

It is proper to say that, under great difficulties, enhanced by winter rains, Marshall succeeded in building the mill—a very good one, too. It had improvements which I had never seen in sawmills, and I had had considerable experience in Ohio.

But the mill would not run because the wheel was placed too low. It was an old-fashioned flutter wheel that propelled an upright saw. The gravelly bar below the mill backed the water up, and submerged and stopped the wheel.

The remedy was to dig a bed or tail-race through the bar below to channel away the water. The wild Indians of the nountains were employed to do the digging. Once through the bar there would be plenty of fall. The digging was hard and took some weeks. As soon as the water began to run through the tail-race the wheel was blocked, the gate raised, and the water permitted to gush through all night.

It was Marshall's custom to examine the race while the water was running through in the morning, so as to direct the Indians where to deepen it, and then shut off the water for them to work during the day. The water was clear as crystal, and the current was swift enough to sweep away the sand and lighter materials.

Marshall made these examinations early in the morning while the Indians were getting their breakfast. It was on one of these occasions, in the clear shallow water, that he saw something bright and yellow. He picked it up—it was a piece of gold! The world has seen and felt the result.

The mill sawed little or no lumber; as a lumber enterprise the project was a failure, but as a gold discovery it was a grand success.

There was no excitement at first, nor for three or four months, because the mine was not known to be rich, or to exist anywhere except at the sawmill, or to be available to any one except Sutter, to whom every one conceded that it belonged.

Time does not permit me to relate how I carried the news of the discovery to San Francisco; how the same year I discovered gold on Feather River and worked it; how I made the first weights and scales to weigh the first gold for Sam Brannan; how the richness of the mines became known by the Mormons who were employed by Sutter to work at the sawmill, working about on Sundays and finding it in the crevices along the stream and taking it to Brannan's store at the fort, and how Brannan kept the gold a secret as long as he could till the excitement burst out all at once like wildfire.

Among the notable arrivals at Sutter's Fort should be mentioned that of Castro and Castillero, in the fall of 1845. The latter had been before in California, sent, as he had been this time, as a peace commissioner from Mexico.

Castro was so jealous that it was almost impossible for Sutter to have anything like a private interview with him. Sutter, however, was given to understand that, as he had stood friendly to Governor Micheltorena on the side of Mexico in the late troubles, he might rely on the friendship of Mexico, to which he was enjoined to continue faithful in all emergencies.

Within a week Castillero was shown at San Jose a singular heavy reddish rock, which had long been known to the Indians, who rubbed it on their hands and faces to paint them. The Californians had often tried to smelt this rock in a blacksmith's fire, thinking it to be silver or some other precious metal. But Castillero, who was an intelligent man and a native of Spain, at once recognized it as quicksilver, and noted its resemblance to the cinnabar in the mines of Almaden.

A company was immediately formed to work it, of which Castillero, Castro, Alexander Forbes, and others were members. The discovery of quicksilver at this time seems providential in view of its absolute necessity to supplement the imminent discovery of gold, which stirred and waked into new life the industries of the world.

It is a question whether the United States could have stood the shock of the great rebellion of 1861 had the California gold discovery not been made.

Bankers and business men of New York in 1864 did not hesitate to admit that but for the gold of California, which monthly poured its five or six millions into the financial center, the bottom would have dropped out of everything. These timely arrivals so strengthened the nerves of trade and stimulated business as to enable the Government to sell its bonds at a time when its credit was its life-blood and the main reliance by which to feed, clothe, and maintain its armies.

Once our bonds went down to thirty-eight cents on the dollar. California gold averted a total collapse, and enabled a preserved Union to come forth from the great conflict with only four billions of debt instead of a hundred billions. The hand of Providence so plainly seen in the discovery of gold is no less manifest in the time chosen for its accomplishment. ●

Reprinted from the Century Magazine, December, 1890 issue.

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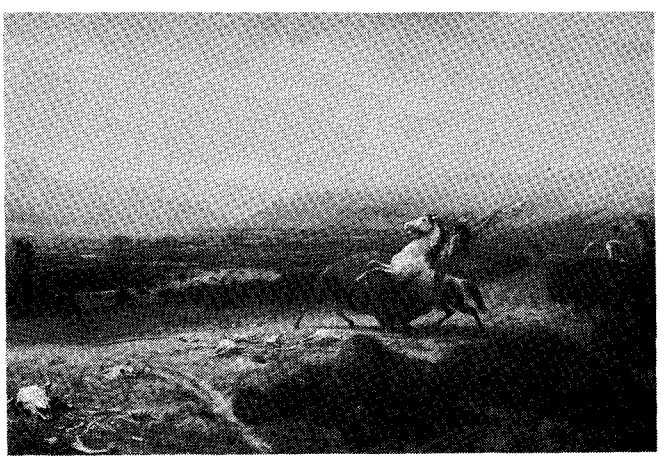

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THE MAIL POUCH

(Continued from page 6)

I enjoy every one of them. Occasionally, how about a yarn or two *after* 1900?

Yours truly,
C.R. Raymond
344 Desert Inn Road
Las Vegas, Nevada

We'll do what we can to please everybody, Mr. Raymond. However, it's plain to see you realize the main concentration will always be on stories prior to 1900.

THANKS FOR CORRECTION

Dear Editor:

I have just read the question and answer page in the April, 1966, issue of *The West*. Your answer to T.P. of Boise, Idaho, concerning Ezra Meeker is slightly incorrect. He only lived in Oregon a few months, then moved to the Puget Sound area in Washington Territory where he spent most of his life.

When Ezra Meeker made a return trip over the Oregon Trail in 1906 he was 76, not 67. His trip started in Washington, the state, and ended in Washington, D.C., the capital, not in Indianapolis. The trip took 22 months to the day. He made the same trip in an airplane when he was 95 years old.

My information is from the book "Ox Team Days on the Oregon Trail" by Ezra Meeker.

Sincerely,
L.B.
Spokane, Wash.

Thank you, L.B. for correcting us on these points. Ezra Meeker was born in Ohio in 1830. He went to Oregon in 1852, but did not stay long and did spend most of his life in Washington. He was 76 when he made his famous trip, and it did end in Washington, D.C.

FOND MEMORIES

Dear Sirs:

I enjoyed the story "The Salmon River Saga" in the April, 1966, issue of *The West* very much. I was in Challis, Idaho, for quite some time in the 1930's and got to know the mountains and especially the middle fork of the Salmon River.

I knew a man there who had grown up around the Little Snake River in southern Wyoming. His name was Falkenbery. He was a hunter, trapper and miner, and owned a little ranch on Loon Creek, which I hear now belongs to some Oregon men (maybe Washington). They made this ranch into a resort. At one time Falkenbery guided hunters and fishermen. Anyhow, when I was there he was known as Bear Gills Falkenbery. They tell me that these new owners have an airplane landing on the place. When I was there the only way to get in was with horses and pack mules. At that time Falkenbery's mailing address was Myers Cave, Idaho.

Your article in *The West* brings back memories of many a bear and deer hunt long ago. Your stories are tops in the West. I know for sure this Salmon River story is true, for I have been on the ground and know the country. I'll be 80 soon, so you see I am living in the past. Memories are very fond to me, however. It's hard to get young people to believe these things did happen. Automobiles have changed everything. We did live well in those days.

Yours truly,
W.J. Clark
Box 1043
Craig, Colorado

THE END OF THE TRAIL

Dear Milt Grayson:

I have been a regular reader of *The West* and *Golden West* ever since the first issues appeared on the newsstands. The stories bring back memories. I came into the world (1894) a bit too late to experience many of the events you tell about, but I enjoy them all the more. Since I was raised in the West, the locales are all familiar.

The articles on Levi's was read with interest because I had never read anything like it before.

I have a modest Western library of some 100 volumes, including the redoubtable "Thirty Years on the Plains and in the Mountains" by William F. Drannan. I have had this volume since school days, when I thought it was a Western bible. Shades of Ned Buntline!

I am enclosing a picture of a painting. I cannot identify it as to title and I don't know who painted it. Can you help me?

Sincerely,
Harold J. Worsley
4435 S. Grant Street
Englewood, Colorado

The picture Mr. Worsley sent is that of a very famous bronze, "The End of the Trail," sculpted by James Earle Fraser, an American artist who also did the designs of the Indian head and buffalo on our five-cent pieces.

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Sirs:

I consider the cover on the June, 1966, issue of *The West* magnificent!

I must have a reproduction! Yes!
Is this possible? Where?
How? And cost?

Thank you,
Paul Wilhelm
P.O. Box 34
Thousand Palms
California

This is just one of the many letters we have received complimenting our June cover "The Last of the Buffalo" painted by Albert Bierstadt. See page 71 for the answers to Mr. Wilhelm's questions. ●

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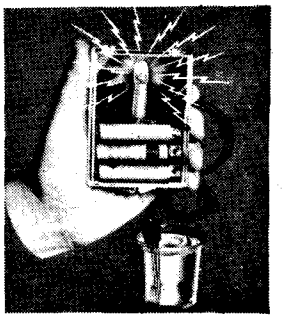

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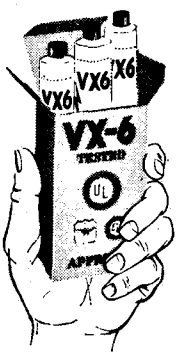

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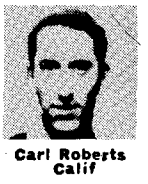

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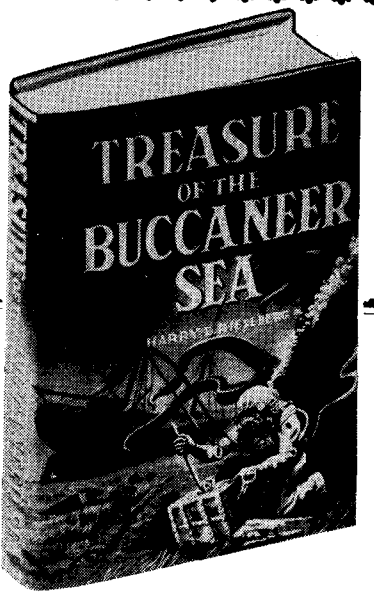

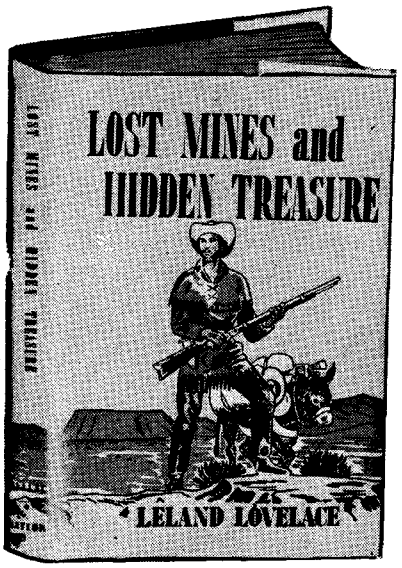

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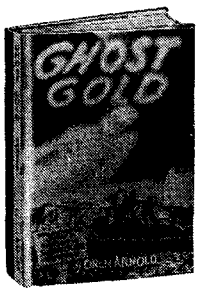

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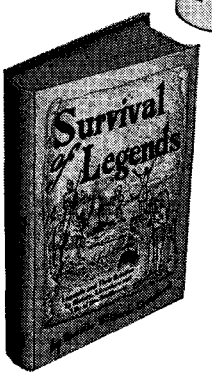

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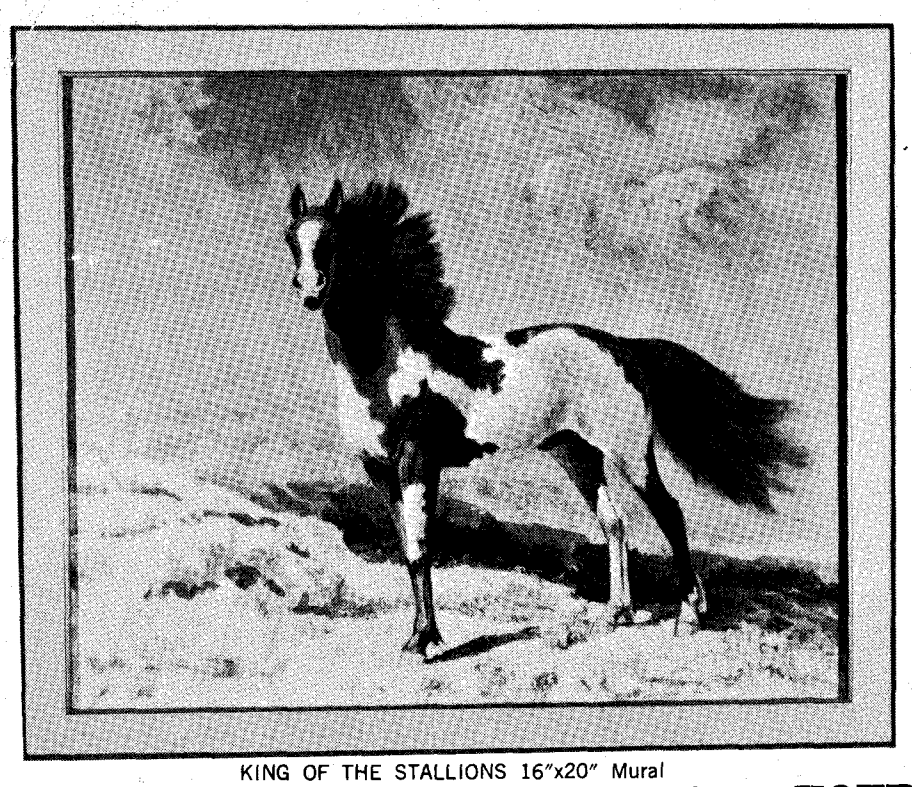

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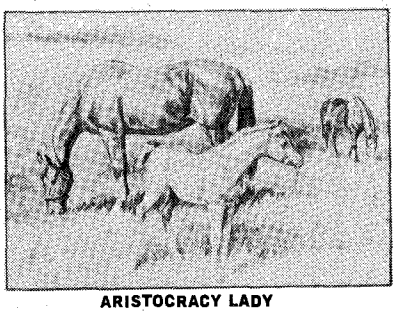
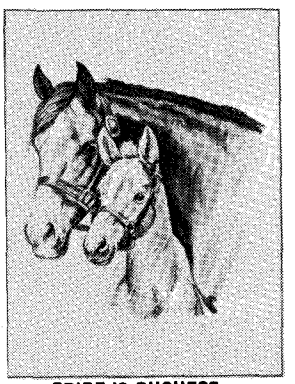


ARISTOCRACY LADY



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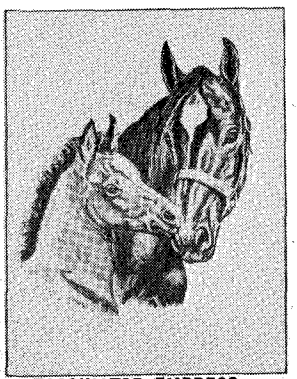

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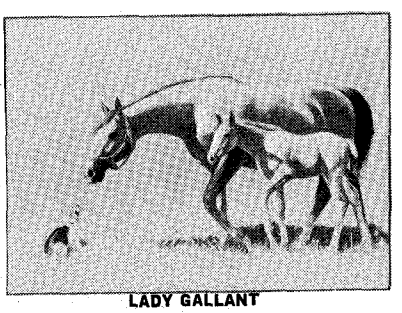

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